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VOL. XXVII

NEZĀMI : MAKHZANOL ASRĀR

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THE OLD WOMAN AND SANJAR

Emery Walker Ltd. ph.c.

MAKHZANOL ASRĀR THE TREASURY OF MYSTERIES

OF
NEZĀMI OF GANJEH

TRANSLATED FOR THE FIRST TIME FROM
THE PERSIAN, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY
ESSAY ON THE LIFE AND TIMES OF NEZĀMI,

BY

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO THE
LOVING MEMORY
OF
MY MOTHER
SHIRIN JAN KHANOM

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P R E F A C E

No apology is needed for presenting this book to the English-speaking people, rather is it due for not presenting this greatest gem of Persian literature before.

Undoubtedly, Nezāmi's poetry has given the great painters of Persia and India their inspiration. I was hoping to reproduce here, in colour, a few of the beautiful relevant miniatures belonging to the collection of Mr. Chester Beatty or to the British Museum. Both Mr. Chester Beatty and the Trustees of the British Museum were willing to let me use their priceless treasures, but as they explained, these treasures were buried deep down in the earth somewhere safe from bombing, and it was, therefore, quite impossible to have any access to them during the war. By permission of Mr. Chester Beatty, however, I was able to have a reproduction made in photogravure of the scene which is the frontispiece. For this permission I express my thanks to him.

My object in this book is to present beautiful and hitherto unrevealed ideas to English poets, so that they, with the inspiration they get from them, might produce something even greater than Fitzgerald's version of the quatrains of Omar Khaiyām, or the beautiful versification of Rostam and Sohrāb by Matthew Arnold.

I have been engaged for some time in the preparation of a commentary on "The Treasury of Mysteries", and I hope it will be ready in due course. Those who understand the nature of such a work will forgive me if I have not been able to have it published now together with the translation.

My thanks are due to my wife who, notwithstanding her long hours of war work and home duties, found time to read the proofs of this work with me. I have also to thank Mr. Probsthain, my publisher, who also willingly helped with reading the proofs and checking the Index. He is highly experienced in this work, and I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating him on his great painstaking, thoroughness, and keen observation. I take, of course, on myself all the blame and responsibilities for any mistakes which may be found in this book. I must also take this opportunity of thanking my printer, Mr. Robert Stockwell, who, notwithstanding the many wartime difficulties, undertook the printing of this work with great efficiency.

The system of transliteration used in this volume is my own. It is the one I introduced after studying phonetics for some years with Professor Daniel Jones of University College. It is quite different from the system used by the Royal Geographical Society and other learned Societies. It is unconventional, but more phonetic. It is not exactly in accordance with the system of the International Phonetic Association either, which I myself introduced some years ago. It is, I am certain, an improvement on it, a slight compromise between the rigid scientific phonetic system and the unsatisfactory and wrong but conventional one. This subject of Persian phonetics is fully discussed in a book which I have prepared and shall soon make available to those interested in the matter. It is sufficient to say here that no distinction is made between the different t, s, h, and z sounds, but ch, kh, sh, gh, and q are purposely used here for their equivalents in Persian, so as not to give too great a shock to those accustomed to the old system of

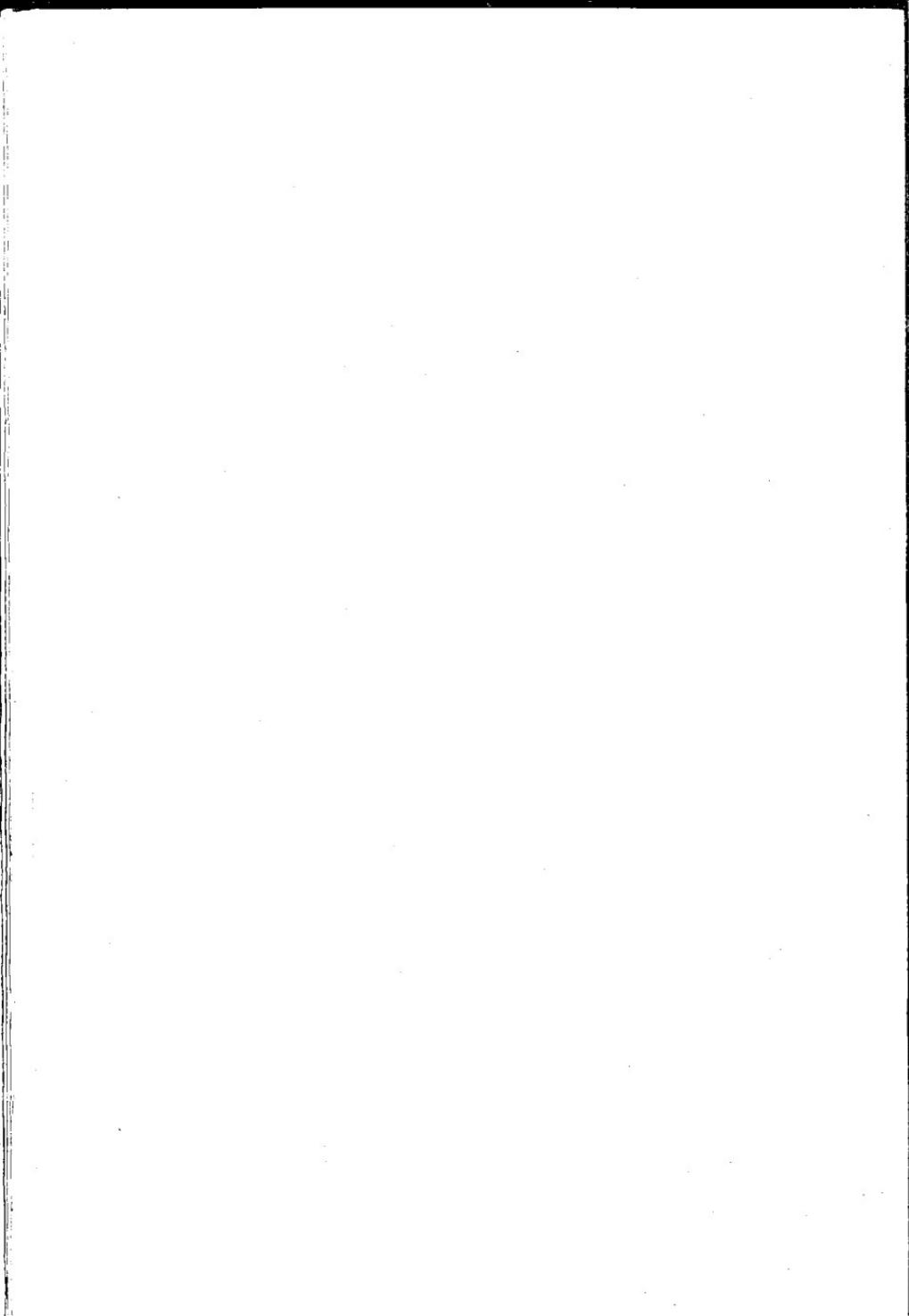
transliteration. The vowels are i, e, a, ā, o, and u, and the diphthongs ei, ai, āi, oi, ui, and ou. I have also compromised with a certain number of words which have been used often in English, e.g. Teheran, Ispahān, Sultan, Sunni, etc. I have also omitted the link (*ezāfeh*) between certain words, as I thought this to be an improvement.

The pages and lines mentioned in "The Life and Times of Nezāmi of Ganjeh" refer to the Khamseh of Nezāmi, lithographed in Teheran in A.H. 1316 (A.D. 1898). There are a few pages duplicated in this edition. These are marked with * when mentioned. The number of lines referred to are those counted downwards and not across the page where there are two couplets in each line. I did not take the same edition as the text for my translation of the *Makhzanol Asrār*, because this edition is rather rare. I have, therefore, taken the Teheran printed edition of 1313 solar (A.D. 1934), printed by Vahid Dastgerdi, as my text. This edition is well printed, cheap, and easily obtainable. The numbers against the couplets in the *Makhzanol Asrār* refer to this edition. When using the text with my translation, the couplets in the Teheran printed edition should be numbered right through. The numbers in brackets in the Treasury of Mysteries refer to the pages of this edition.

There are two or three lines which occur more than once in the text, e.g. line 415, page 115, and line 457, page 118, and I have translated these accordingly.

G. H. DĀRAB.

FERN LODGE,
ST. MARY CRAY, KENT.
November, 1944.



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	do.	Or. 1363.
	do.	Add. 7729.
	do.	Add. 16,780.
	do.	Add. 16,782.
	do.	Add. 19,500.
	do.	Add. 25,799.
	do.	Add. 25,900.
	do.	Add. 26,146.
	do.	Add. 26,147.
	do.	Add. 27,260.

India Office MS. 402.

Persian historical works :

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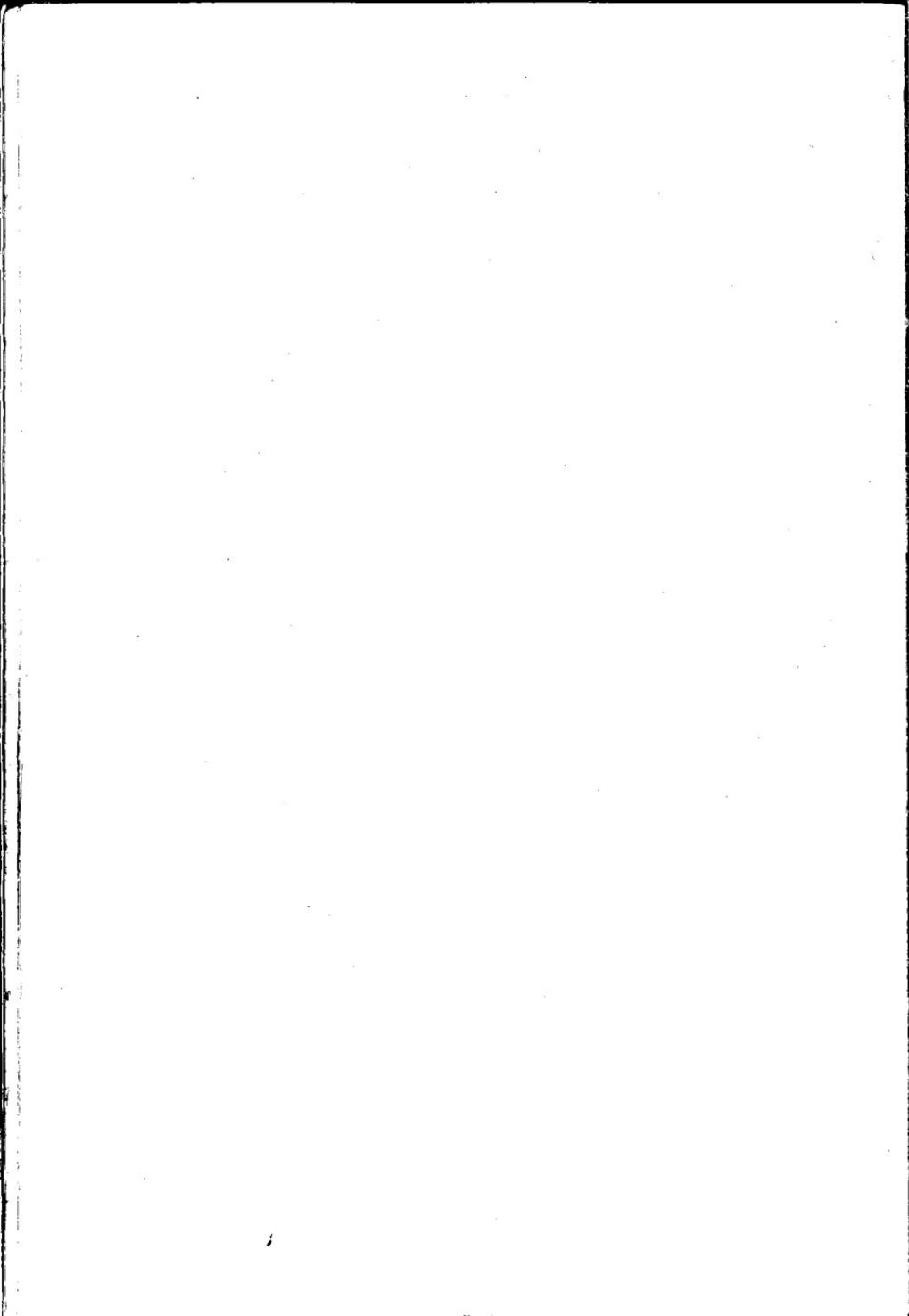
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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF NEZĀMI OF GANJEH

THE biographers have been in the dark as to the date of the birth of Nezāmi, one of the greatest poets of Persia, while as to the date of his death, they differ as much as 27 years.

He was the son of Yusof, the son of Zaki, the son of Mo'aiyad, and was born near Qom in A.D. 1145. His mother, Ra'iseh, was the daughter of a Kurdish chieftain, and his uncle was Khājeh Hasan, by whom he was brought up.

He emigrated to Ganjeh, where he lived the whole of his life in the utmost fame and sanctity, and where he died in A.D. 1207.

He married three wives, two of whom were the daughters of kings. By his first wife he had a son, named Mohammad.

He wrote five books, the Five Treasures. He completed Makhzanol Asrār in A.D. 1184, Khosrou Shirin in A.D. 1185, Leili Majnun in A.D. 1192, Haft Peikar in A.D. 1197, the first part of the Eskandar Nāmeh in A.D. 1200, and the last part in A.D. 1202. He also wrote a *divān*, some fragments of which still exist. The kings of his time considered it an honour to be favoured with his company. He mostly shunned their courts, but dedicated his books to them at their request.

Nezāmi's times saw great upheavals in the political affairs of Persia, the defeat, capture, and death of Sanjar, the consequent disintegration of the Great Saljuq Empire, the rise and fall of the Khārazm Shāhs and the Atābeiks, the fall of the Ghaznavids, the activities of the Assassins, and the first signs of the greatest calamity the world yet witnessed, namely, the invasion of the Mongols.

All Persians and Orientalists who are acquainted with the literature of Persia agree that Nezāmi of Ganjeh, as a writer of romantic poetry, is the finest, noblest, most original, and most prolific of the Persian poets of all ages.

A comparison of his Leili and Majnun with the Yusof and Zoleikhā of Ferdousi should be a convincing proof of the vast superiority of Nezāmi over Ferdousi as far as romantic poetry is concerned, and this in spite of the fact that the Leili and Majnun is not one of Nezāmi's best romantic works.

In the sphere of epic poetry, he stands next only to Ferdousi himself. Even in this sphere, when dealing with historical facts, such as the career and conquest of Alexander the Great, Nezāmi often approaches in style and grandeur the Shāh Nāmeh of Ferdousi. It is indeed difficult to find in the Shāh Nāmeh of Ferdousi a passage more sublime and beautiful, more expressive and melodious than some of those in the Khosrou Shirin or in the Haft Peikar of Nezāmi.

As a writer of mystic, just as of romantic poetry, he is still unrivalled by any poet of any period. A comparison of his Makhzanol Asrār with the Hadiqeh of Sanā'i, or the Manteqot Teir of Attār, or the Matla'ol Anvār of Amir Khosrou of Delhi, or the Tohfatal Ahrār of Jāmi, will convince us of the greatly superior force, purity, melody, and beauty of language, and spiritual conviction of the first over the others.

Every line of his Treasury of Mysteries is a living witness to his absolute certainty that piety, devotion, humility, and self-forgetfulness are the four corner stones of total annihilation, which in turn is necessary for unification with God and the foundation of the edifice of eternal life.

Indeed Jāmi, in his Nafahātol Ons, justly remarks : "Although most of Nezāmi's works on the surface appear to be romance, in reality they are a mask for essential truths and for the explanation of divine knowledge."

He combined piety and ascetism and universality of genius with a feeling of tolerance, and at times even respect for the beliefs of others. He was a rigid Sunni, yet not once in his works has he attacked the Shi'as or any other sect or religion. He was conscious of his own greatness, yet he bore the burden of his poverty with independence and resignation. He repaid the malice of his enemies, as he had no rival, with loving advice and tender feelings.

He was frequently requested by kings and ruling princes of his time to immortalize their names in his books. His loving nature and the dictates of circumstances, not gain, made him lavish praises on the kings who had desired to be mentioned.

Hāfez compares his own poetry with that of Nezāmi, and says :

“ O Hāfez ! Thy poetry is full of lustre like a string
of perfect pearls,
Which, at the time of rapture and ecstasy, surpasses
Nezāmi's rhyme.”

Faiyāzi says as follows :

“ Do not enquire about the magic of Ganjeh's
Treasurer,
Because his pen was a serpent, protecting the
hidden treasure of divine secrets.

If a false prophet could produce verses equal to
those in the Qor'ān,
It may be then possible to imagine that other poets
could produce poetry equal to that of Nezāmi.”

Hāshemi of Kermān calls Nezāmi “ the revealer of mystic forms, the unique pearl of the ocean of divine benevolence, the kingly jewel of the sea of existence ”, and says that the empire of poetry obtained its laws and order from Nezāmi's beautiful verses. “ To present words before Nezāmi's silent speech,” he says, “ is waste of time.”

It will be unnecessary to quote more verses of other poets written in praise of Nezāmi, because this would be an endless task. Among the many notable poets who have taken the Five Treasures of Nezāmi as their model may be mentioned Amir Khosrou of Delhi, Khājū of Kermān, Jāmi, and Hātefi. Besides these, scores of poets have imitated the Makhzanol Asrār and many scores of poets have started their masnavi with the first line of the Makhzanol Asrār. To take a poet as his model, or to begin his work with the first line of the poetry of the master, is the greatest tribute a poet of Persia can give to him. There is no other poet in Persia whose works have been taken as a model nearly as much as the works of Nezāmi, in spite of his being a Sunni and the Persians Shi'as. Moreover, it is necessary to add that Nezāmi is the first Persian poet who broke away from the customary form of the panegyric and invented the new form of the masnavi, which has remained a perfect model up to the present day.

Arefi in his Hāl Nāmeh prays to " Love " as follows :
 " Oh, Love, look upon my condition
 And reveal to me the mystery of Truth,
 In order that like a ball my soul may rise
 And lift my head to the bliss of ecstasy,
 In order that I may be precious in the eyes of the
 world,
 Like the jewels of Nezāmi's rhymes."

Mirzā Fath Ali Khān in his Shāhanshāh Nāmeh says :
 " Nezāmi, who in Persian eloquence
 Can well claim kingship,
 Brought his troubles to an end at the time of
 Bahrām ;
 In his name he created Five Treasures."

Qāsemi in his Shāh Nāmeh associated his own work with that of Nezāmi in the following strain :

" I would open the door of the Treasury of Mysteries
 (Makhzanol Asrār)

And would display the light from the path of the
 rising sun.

I would relate the romance of Leili and Majnun
 And would fill the world with hidden pearls.

I would sing the beauties of Shirin and Khosrou
 And would open the door of reality to the world."

Though all the poets and biographers are of one accord in their praises of Nezāmi, they are equally wanting in any useful biographical facts and dates concerning him.

From amongst the biographers Hāji Lotf Ali Beig in his Ātash Kadeh says that Nezāmi's full name is Abu Mohammad Elyās, son of Yusof, son of Mo'aiyad. His father was from Tafresh, a dependency of Qom. He went to Ganjeh, where Nezāmi was born. He was a pupil of Akhi Faraj. His good qualities, he says, are beyond count, and as a poet he is above praise, and from the beginning of his life to the end he did not court, for worldly gain, the favours of the kings and nobles like other poets. But on the contrary, his threshold was the sanctuary of the great kings.

He also incidentally mentions the visit of Alp Arsalān to Nezāmi's monastery, and says that after the poet's death, which took place in A.H. 586, his five books were collected and were called the Khamseh, and each of them was written at the request of a reigning monarch. He also says that Nezāmi is buried at Ganjeh and his grave is a place of pilgrimage. We are also told that besides the Khamseh he has written 20,000 couplets or panegyrics, odes, quatrains and qata'āt which are no longer extant. But he writes 62 couplets which he says he has seen and selected from different memoirs.

Jāmi in the Nafahātol Ons says that Nezāmi wrote his last book, the Eskandar Nāmeh, in A.H. 592 (A.D. 1196) and at that time he was over 60 years of age. In his Bahārestān he only mentions that Nezāmi's excellence is more manifest than the sun and has no need of descrip-

tion. But he quotes one of his odes, showing that besides his Khamseh, Nezāmi has also written a *divān* of odes.

It would be vain to try to enumerate all the leading features and characteristics of Nezāmi's poetry, or to tell in how many respects he excels all other poets.

He was most learned and his works show how well he knew the arts and sciences of his time. He has presented to us an intellectual banquet as rich as it is picturesque. His whole work is embellished with graceful tastes and the vivid lights of a varied imagination. In his touches of the tenderest pathos, his outbursts of eloquence, grace and beauty, in simplicity of style, and in the melody of his poetry he is without a rival. The grandeur of his lofty and dignified language is quite in keeping with the sublimity of his themes. Every line of his Khamseh displays his power of eloquence, gorgeous, majestic imagery, and melodious musical versification.

In his sorrows he is natural, gentle, calm, dignified, and eloquent. In short, he always awakens our best feelings.

Of his works the most beautiful are Makhzanol Asrār, Khosrou Shirin, and Haft Peikar. As the subject matter of the Khamseh has been explained by many scholars, I need not detain the reader with it.

Notwithstanding that Nezāmi is the master of mystic poetry and the lord and creator of romantic poetry to a degree never approached by any poet before or since his time, and although he is only second to Ferdousi himself in epic poetry, yet we have hardly any information as to his life.

The following shows the confusion of the biographers even as regards the date of the death of Nezāmi : Doulat Shāh says that Nezāmi died in A.H. 576 ; the Ātash Kadeh says A.H. 586 ; the Jahān Ārā gives A.H. 597 ; Hāji Khalifeh mentions A.H. 596 ; the Sobh-e Sādeq gives A.H. 602, and Taqi Kāshi mentions A.H. 606, a discrepancy of 30 years. There being so little reliable information left

to us concerning the life of Nezāmi, it is necessary to get this information from his own works.

Let us consider the following passages from the Makhzanol Asrār, the first of his Five Treasures. The quotations are taken from the Teheran lithographed edition of A.H. 1316 (A.D. 1898) of the Five Treasures, and the references to pages and lines belong to that edition. I have compared this edition with the India Office MS. 402, dated A.D. 1488, and the British Museum MS. Add. 7729, dated A.D. 1400, which are the oldest MSS. in this country. I will indicate the fact whenever I find a different reading between the Teheran edition and these manuscripts.

MATERIAL FROM MAKHZANOL ASRĀR

P.9, l. 15.

"Thou art the guide, why is the caravan alone?

Thou hast the centre of the army, why is the banner here?

From one side they attack the religion;
From other sides they ambush.

Either send an Ali to the line of the battle-field,
Or send an Omar to the gate of Satan.

Five hundred and eighty years (A.D. 1184-85) is
enough to sleep;

The day is getting on, make haste to the assembly."

This shows that Nezāmi is not satisfied with the religious behaviour of the people and invokes the return of Mohammad to come and protect the Faith which is assailed from all directions. It also, together with other quotations which will follow, proves that he was a Sunni. The date 580 after the death of Mohammad (A.D. 1184-85) is of the utmost importance in our search for the birth, the times, and the death of Nezāmi. This same date is given in the British Museum MS. Add. 7729, fol. 4b, line 13, second couplet, and also in the India Office MS. 402. I am convinced, however, that the 580 must mean

580 after the Hejrat, not after the death of the Prophet. The Makhzanol Asrār is dedicated to Fakhrod-Din Bahram Shāh, son of Dāvud, who is described as King of Armenia and Rum. This Bahrām Shāh was the hereditary ruler of the principality of Arzanjān and reigned from A.H. 578 until his death in A.H. 622, therefore the Teheran edition, the India Office MS. 402 and the British Museum MS. Or. 1216, together with scores of biographers, Persian and non-Persian, cannot be correct in giving the date of the completion of Makhzanol Asrār as A.H. 559.

The following will be the second quotation :

P. 10, l. 20.

" I who, in the circle of this universe,
Like the pivot of the compass, became a prisoner
in the city,

Have no ability to go forth ;
I have the shadow, but not the glory of the
Phœnix.

My foot has stuck in this dust ;
I am holding to the cord of fortune.

I have bowed down my head to my feet
And stepped on my bended knee.

When the mind's eye, with sound judgment
Searched quickly round the world,

I saw from my soul's high position
The bestower of dignity, the lord of favours,

The king of heaven's crown, possessing Solomon's
signet,
The pride of skies, the King Fakhrod-Din.

His lineage goes straight to David,
For his nobility the name of Solomon is befitting.

The banner of Isaac is raised by him ;
If he has an enemy, it is an Esmā'ili.

He possesses one heart, six directions, and seven
courts,

The centre of nine circles, Bahrām Shāh ;

Teach the ear of morning the lessons of polite
knowledge ;

Kindle with happiness the candle of eloquence.

Send the world's robe of honour to a servant ;
Send a perfume of acceptance to Nezāmi.

This sea and mine (of knowledge) is without pearl
and ruby ;

Give him pearls from the hand and rubies from
the mouth."

P. 12, l. 3.

" I who am the singer of this fresh rose
For thy garden, am a nightingale of rare melody.

I have not accepted favours from any one ;

Whatsoever my heart has bid me to say, I have
said."

This passage shows that the poet is living in the city
and complains of his inability to go out, and that by his
own effort he tries to improve the state of his affairs.

His mind wanders through the world to find a helper.
He dedicates his book to the King Fakhrod-Din. This
is the only passage in the whole of Nezāmi's work where
he very mildly attacks the belief of others by saying that
the only enemy the king could have is an Esmā'ili. In
order to commemorate a king's name in his book, the
poet was obliged, according to custom, to ask favours
from the king, so he asks the king for a robe of honour,
pearls and rubies. But to show that he is not lavishing
praise on the king for the sake of gain, he says that

his heart has compelled him to say what he writes and not the thought of gain, as he had not received from other kings anything not belonging to himself.

On page 12, beginning at line 6, he gives a detailed description of how and why he dedicates his Makhzanol Asrār to the then ruling prince, Bahrām Shāh. He starts by saying that for a few mornings he had pondered over wisdom and learning. As a result of this meditation he had produced a magic curtain, meaning the Treasury of Mysteries. He justly claims that his Makhzanol Asrār contains both royal dignity and the religious life of poverty. He further asserts that its sweetness is not contaminated by any flies, nor does it spoil the sweetness of others, meaning that no other poet has imitated it, nor has he borrowed from or imitated any other poet. As he himself mentions, he has drawn by lot the names of kings and found Bahrām Shāh the fortunate winner and dedicates his book to him in consequence. He also refers to another book written by another poet, and dedicated to another Bahrām Shāh ruling in Ghaznin. This other book is evidently the Hadiqeh of Sana'i.

He praises Sana'i's work, but justly considers his own superior. He again tells the king that no one has read his book and advises him to read it, saying that, if it possesses beauty and divine knowledge, he should study it, and if it does not, he should forget it. In the following line he says the king has proved faithful to him and for that reason he is devoted to him, and although many eulogists and praisers are at the court of the king, yet they all bow before Nezāmi. We understand in the same passage that Nezāmi used to frequent the king's court, but he really wished to remain more or less in seclusion and spend his life in religious devotions. He brings a subtle excuse for not attending the king's court by saying he is surrounded by people and not able to emerge, evidently meaning that his family requirements and private life prevented him from attending the king's

court in person. His other excuse is that the king's presence is very exalted, and that the king is protected by lions and brave warriors who make the approach to his court very difficult.

He praises the king with a loud voice, so that the king may hear him, meaning that he is dedicating and sending his *Makhzanol Asrār* to the king, Bahrām Shāh, Fakhrod Din, the son of Dāvud.

On page 14, beginning with line 17, we are given a clear vision of Nezāmi's high rank as a poet and of his reputation, which had spread in every direction even in his own lifetime. Nezāmi, moreover, fully realizes his own poetic talent and genius. I cannot do better than quote the following three lines, the reference to which was given above.

"The temple of poetry was built through me;
Poetical talent obtained glory by me."

The hermit and the monk rushed towards me
And threw off the beggar's clothes and belt.

Whoever exists, may he be young or old,
Becomes bewitched by my magic words."

On page 15, line 12, we have an important reference to the age of the poet, the significance of which will be shown, when we deal with the exact time of his life when he was writing his third book, the *Leili and Majnum*. On this page he says that his poetical works are the result of forty years of blending genius and intellect. At forty years of age the intellect is matured, and her requirements on her journey through the world are increased.

Then he addresses himself and says :

"Thou requirest a friend now, do not resort to magic spells;

Do not study now, what thou shouldst have learned in forty years."

Evidently the poet, when writing this passage, was about, if not exactly, forty years old. Previously we had the reference calling upon Mohammad to awake from a sleep of 580 years and protect his faith. This 580 must be after the Hejrat and not after the death of Mohammad, which occurred 11 years after the Hejrat. It is a peculiarly Persian mode of expression in similar circumstances to call upon the Prophet to awake after a long sleep and to quote the date of the Hejrat. They say Noah was a prophet for 900 years, although they realise that Noah could not have been a prophet from his birth until his death. We can take the poet's words as definitely meaning he was 40 years of age, and if the Makhzanol Asrār was written in A.H. 580 (A.D. 1184) and the poet was 40 years of age at that time, he must have been born in A.H. 540 (A.D. 1145-46). The poet could easily have given any of the following dates, if he wished, without destroying the metre : 570, 560, 550, etc. Only in the date 560 he would have had to increase the word "sāl" after the date and still be correct in his metre. It is interesting to note that the Calcutta lithographed edition gives the date A.H. 570 (A.D. 1174) to this line. These two different readings still help to prove that the poet was born in A.D. 1145-46, because if we suppose Nezāmi called upon the Prophet to awake after a sleep of 570 years, then the date of his sleep must be taken to mean the date of his death, i.e. A.H. 11 (A.D. 632). But on the other hand, if we suppose the poet said, "awake after a sleep of 580 years," this 580 years must be taken to mean 580 years after the Hejrat. The difference of one year is thus produced. This difference disappears if we suppose the line was written either near the beginning of the year 570 after the death of the Prophet, or near the end of the year 580 after the Hejrat.

It is also possible, and I think most probable, that the poet himself is responsible for these two apparently dif-

ferent dates. Possibly in his first manuscript he wrote 580 years and he thought of the Hejrat. In his next copy he wrote 570 to coincide actually with 570 after the death of the Prophet. This conjecture would become a certainty, if we could find an old manuscript giving 570 as the number of years of the Prophet's sleep. So far, both the British Museum MS. Add. 7729, and the India Office MS. 402 give the date 580 years after the sleep of the Prophet. This, as shown previously, must be taken to mean A.H. 580 and not after the Prophet's death, which occurred in A.H. 11.

Another important consideration in fixing the date of the birth of the poet and the composition of the Makhzanol Asrār is his death. His last book, the Eskandar Nāmeh, was completed in A.H. 599 (A.D. 1202-03) (see the British Museum MS. Add. 16,782, fol. 117, and the Calcutta lithographed edition, p. 182). In A.H. 599 (A.D. 1202-03), i.e. when he completed the second part of the Eskandar Nāmeh, he was 60 years old (see the British Museum MS. Add. 25,900, fol. 319a, the India Office MS. 402, fol. 722a, l. 12, the British Museum MS. Add. 7729, fol. 315a, and the Teheran lithographed edition, page 644). He died soon after the completion of the second book of the Eskandar Nāmeh at the age of $63\frac{1}{2}$ years (see the British Museum MSS. Add. 7729, fol. 313b, Add. 25,900, fol. 317b, and the Teheran edition, page 642). This must have been in the middle of A.H. 604 (A.D. 1207-8), and since he was $63\frac{1}{2}$ years old at his death and he died in the middle of A.H. 604 (A.D. 1207-8) he must have been born A.H. 540 (A.D. 1145-46). This coincides with our important discovery of his bidding the Prophet awake after a sleep of 580 years at the time when the poet was 40 years old, and when 580 meant after the Hejrat.

Briefly then, Nezāmi was born in A.H. 540 (A.D. 1145-46), completed Makhzanol Asrār in A.H. 580 (A.H. 1184), and died in the middle of A.H. 604 (A.D. 1207-8).

The Makhzanol Asrār, the most beautiful mystic poem in the Persian language, has both perfection of language and grandeur of thought. It is undoubtedly the product of a matured mind and the highest standard of intellect, and it is inconceivable that any human being could have attained this degree of development and matured thought at an age younger than 40 years. The date given for the completion of the Makhzanol Asrār in the Teheran lithographed edition, the British Museum MS. Or. 1216, fol. 31, and the India Office MS. 402, is A.H. 559 (A.D. 1163-64). As the poet was born in A.H. 540 (A.D. 1145-46), it would mean that he wrote the Makhzanol Asrār when he was 19 years old, which is absurd. The same absurdity is apparent in the Haft Āsmān of Āghā Ahmad Ali and in Hājjī Khalifeh in giving the date A.H. 559 (A.D. 1163-64) for the completion of the Makhzanol Asrār. The British Museum MS. Add. 19,500 (last page) gives the completion of the Makhzanol Asrār as A.H. 582 (A.D. 1186), which is nearer to the truth than any other copies I have seen.

Dr. Rieu is therefore wrong, in the British Museum Catalogue, Persian Manuscripts, Vol. II, p. 565, in giving the death of Nezāmi as A.H. 598 or A.H. 599. He is, however, right in saying that Nezāmi lived for sixty three and a half years, but he wrongly reckons from A.H. 535 (A.D. 1140-41) as the date of his birth.

The Sobh-e Sādeq seems to be nearer to the truth than any other biography in giving the date A.H. 602 as the date of the poet's death. Nezāmi's birthplace is Qohestān, in the district of Qom, as he refers to this fact in his Eskander Nāmeh, page 574 of the Teheran edition. There he says : "Although I am lost as a pearl in the sea of Ganjeh, yet I am from the Qohestān of the city of Qom." This Qohestān is probably the mountainous district of Qom. We have no authoritative evidence in the works of the poet himself to substantiate

Hāji Lotf Ali Beig's assertion in his Ātash Kadeh that Nezāmi's father was from Tafresh, and that his father went to Ganjeh, where Nezāmi was born. It is, however, in accordance with Nezāmi's saying to suppose that he was born near Qom. As mentioned by Nezāmi on page 16, line 10, he lived a life of retirement and poverty, yet contentment. He was sensitive to the ridicule of his enemies and seems to have suffered at their hands. He says on page 49, beginning with line 9, that "the dust of the earth is not clean except by virtue, and virtue is not found in this earth to-day. If virtue lifts up her head, vice will lay hands on her. They will worry the skilled man, until they destroy his art." Evidently his enemies, who were not so gifted in the art of poetry as Nezāmi was, were troublesome to him. They even associated his asceticism and meditation with insanity. He complains that his enemies cannot see virtue or find anything except faults and shortcomings. But he bore their attacks and sneers with a noble endurance and philosophical mind. Indeed, he compares them with a blind man who could not see the Tigris, or with an ant carrying with great difficulty a wing of a locust. His enemies are only two or three in number, but he does not mention their names.

On page 50, line 10, we find him in a different mood ; here he mentions that he has written Makhzanol Asrār as a result of a few nights' meditation. He realizes that poverty has compelled him to remain in Ganjeh, although everywhere outside Ganjeh they would receive him with open arms. He seems not to have received anything except acclamation and applause from his admirers. He realizes that, if he went to Erāk, he would be favourably received by everyone. We do not know, however, the exact reason of his being unable to leave Ganjeh ; surely poverty could not be the only reason, because, no matter how poor he may have been, he could certainly have left Ganjeh, as that could not have meant a great expense.

I believe that he was compelled to remain in Ganjeh for some reason unknown at present, and I doubt if it ever will be known. He continually refers to his being imprisoned in Ganjeh and forbidden to go out; he never mentions the cause. His great sanctity would have prevented his being imprisoned in Ganjeh. In the conclusion of Makhzanol Asrār he says, he lowered his head and from his lips he scattered pearls, and brought the Treasury of Mysteries to completion. He gives thanks to God that he has finished the Makhzanol Asrār, and further, he tells us the important fact that most of his life has come to an end.

The India Office MS. 402 and the British Museum copy, Or. 1216, folio 31, have two couplets which are not found in the Teheran edition. These give the date of the completion of Makhzanol Asrār as 24th Rabi', A.H. 559 (Feb. 20, 1164). These dates cannot be correct, as it would make Nezāmi 19 years old on the completion of Makhzanol Asrār, or it would give the duration of his life as 84½ years, which, as shown previously, cannot be right. The other British Museum copy, Add. 19,500, gives A.H. 582 as the date of the completion of Makhzanol Asrār, which is only out by two years.

Another fact which we have as a guide is that Nezāmi's son, as we find on page 192, line 25, in the Khosrou Shirin, the second book of Nezāmi, was seven years old when the poet wrote that book. It will be shown that he completed the Khosrou Shirin in A.H. 581, therefore at the completion of Makhzanol Asrār his son must have been six years old. As Nezāmi often refers to his poverty, and we find later on that he was brought up by his uncle, Khājeh Hasan, it is not likely that he could have married at the age of 13 years or less.

MATERIAL FROM KHOSROU SHIRIN

On page 56, line 24, again we find Nezāmi a rigid Sunni. He mentions that the Prophet gave the temple

of his laws four cardinal directions and founded four eternal walls for it, meaning, of course, the first four Caliphs. On page 57, line 3, he mentions that the four friends of the Prophet give out the five prayers in the royal procession of Mohammad, the Prophet.

On page 64, beginning at line 15, we are given an interesting incident in the life of Nezāmi. He had shut himself up from the world, and his only occupations were prayer and devotion. After prayers he used occasionally to spend his time in the study of astronomy. He had only one pious and godly friend who was allowed to frequent his society. This friend was a helper and protector and sympathiser of Nezāmi, although he also used to live in retirement and seclusion. One night, while Nezāmi was in deep meditation, he entered and began to reproach and rebuke Nezāmi severely, saying : "Thou art supposed to be the lord of spiritual understanding and the king of eloquence and speech. Thou hast been deceived by the deceit of the idolators and fire-worshippers. Thou hast revived the fables of the Zoroastrians. Sing the song of the Unity of God ; why art thou reviving the customs of the Magians ? Although the fire-worshippers consider thy heart alive, yet the true believers consider it dead." The poet was not embittered by these reproaches and began to read a few passages from the love stories of the beautiful Shirin. When his friend heard these ravishing stories, he remained silent, as though he had lost his speech. Nezāmi said : " Why art thou silent now, and how is it thou canst not find words for praise ? " The friend surrendered himself to Nezāmi with the utmost humiliation and asked him to complete his story and finish the building, the foundation of which he had laid so beautifully. Then the poet calls on himself to leave the prison city of Ganjeh, to attack like a lion, to spread his shadow like a phoenix, and to relinquish the country to a few owls. He seems to have a few bitter enemies who are jealous of his fame and virtue. He

knows that if he leaves the country he will not hear even the names of his enemies after two stages. He compares those enemies with candles which are at the same time moths, taking pleasure in their own scanty lights in their own homes.

This interesting incident in the life of the poet must have occurred soon after the commencement of the Khosrou Shirin, and he must have roused the censure and wrath of the fanatical Sunnis of the city. It also shows the deep love and attachment which united the poet with his country and her glorious past. Although he himself was a Sunni, in his heart he could not find a more sublime and majestic theme to harmonise with his lofty imagination and power of description.

On page 57, line 15, we find interesting aspects of his life. He tells us that fortune approached him. A messenger came from King Toghrel, the son of Arsalān, asking him to 'paint a new image for the world,' because the world was without any entrancing stories.

The royal message was that he should teach the spirit as Jesus did, and to kindle the candle of love like Moses.

He promised the poet that he would liberally reward him for his toil and would not treat him as Ferdousi was treated by Mahmud. He told him that if he broke his promise, Nezāmi could satirize him in the same way as Ferdousi satirized Mahmud. Then Nezāmi has a soliloquy with his heart. He says to himself that the successful poets obtained their fame through the kings. They were not poverty stricken and had no worries about their daily sustenance ; their minds were free to exercise their full force on the production of poetry. "But I have turned my face away from the world and have to subsist on and content myself with a small piece of barley bread." He likens himself to a serpent sleeping on the top of a treasure, and to a treasure which has shut itself out from the eyes of the world. He then addresses the king in his mind and tells him that he only requires encouragement from the king and nothing else, and that although

he possesses no wealth, yet he possesses the blessing of contentment, which is more than enough for him.

Further on, on page 58, we find that when the messenger of Toghrel came to him, he was already contemplating the subject matter of Khosrou Shirin, and that he was already engaged in laying the foundation of this edifice. He accepted Toghrel's offer and, as he tells us, he completed the work in a short time, but delayed in sending it to the court on account of "the king's engagements".

Then he sends his book to the court, dedicated to Toghrel, and says : " If the book gives any pleasure to the king, he may reward me for it." He also addresses himself to the Atābek, Abu Ja'far Mohammad, who was the son of Atābek Ildegez, the Viceroy of Toghrel, and says : " The time has come when the Atābek should look upon Nezāmi with favour. The Atābek should ask himself how much longer should such an eloquent person remain in seclusion and such a master of speech remain unprovided for. Let the Atābek also remind himself that this melodious singing bird has been singing his praise and giving thanks for his favours during a lifetime without having received any favours." We do not find any reference to Nezāmi having received any rewards from either Toghrel or the Atābek. As a matter of fact it is evident, as we shall shortly see, that he never received any recompense for his trouble from either of them ; yet he was not embittered against them, and bestowed his requested praises with a mind more generous and a resignation more noble than could be found in any poet of any period in Persia. The excuse that the Atābek gave for not rewarding the poet was that Nezāmi should frequent his court and give up his life of retirement. Evidently Nezāmi had heard the Atābek's objection, and, as found on page 56, line 2, he answers, saying : " With regard to what thou complainest of, that I am not always attending thy court, let it not be hidden from

thee that my companions are prayers, and not men ; I who have chosen a life of retirement, am made of vinegar and honey ; half of my temperament has opened the spring of life, the other half, composed of piety, compels me to carry my burden upon my own shoulder." He says he is like musk and has obtained his perfume of piety through retirement and seclusion, and, like the phœnix, he has accustomed himself to loneliness. He excuses himself from the company of the king in saying that the rose of the king's banquet should not be spoiled by such a thorn as himself, and that he is unable to discharge any service except prayers. He states that he is not well versed in service required by the king's courtiers, and that he is happier when alone. This shows to what an extent the kings of his time coveted his company, and how the poet avoided an easy and luxurious life and contented himself with his own scanty provision.

He prefers his life of piety and seclusion for the purpose of meditation and prayers to the glory which the king could bestow upon him.

On page 63, line 14, we are told the reason which compelled him to write the romance of Khosrou Shirin. He says :

‘ As I have a treasure like Makhzanol Asrār,
Why should I trouble about romances ?

But there is no one in the world to-day
Who has no desire for romance and fables.’

This is a decisive proof that the Makhzanol Asrār was written before the Khosrou Shirin. We must also remember that the Atābek Mohammad who is mentioned by Nezāmi, died in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), therefore the poet must have started the composition of Khosrou Shirin and completed it before A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185). As we will find later, he dedicated the Khosrou Shirin afterward to Qezel Arsalān who succeeded his brother, the Atābek Mohammad, as a young man. This

Qezel Arsalān was murdered in his sleep five years later. We also have in Khosrou Shirin a eulogy on his nephew and successor, the Atābek, Nosratod-Din Abu Bakr, the son of Mohammad, which was written after the murder of his uncle.

The poet tells us that the story of Khosrou and Shirin is well known, that it is entralling, and that there is no sweeter love story than this. He admits fairly and justly that he has learned this story from the old history books of his country, specially alluding to Ferdousi. Incidentally he has painted for us a true picture of some of the ancient monuments of Persia which, as he says, existed during his own time, and of which the ravages of time have robbed us. During his time the Bisotun, the engraving of Shabdiz, the horse of Parviz, his palace, the engineering works of Farhād, the channel of the stream of Shirin, the remains of her palace, the Khosrou's palace and his hunting grounds, were still existing.

On page 192, line 15, we find him as a great astronomer. With the astrolabe of knowledge he has solved all the difficulties of the skies. Every one who asked him questions concerning the condition of the skies has received satisfactory answers from him. In a few lines he explains how the universe was brought into being. "There is first the point ; the point moves along and creates a line, that is the first divine motion. The point moves perpendicularly on this line, and from this second movement surface is evolved. The surface revolves round its axis and space is created." He considers the creation from beginning to end in this manner. This shows how fruitfully, besides composing his works of art, he has spent his time in the study of the sciences of mathematics and astronomy.

It is interesting to note that the science of astronomy was one of the important, if not necessary, accomplishments of a poet. A knowledge of astronomy and judicial astrology was of special advantage to a court poet who

would improve his position and prestige, if he could predict an event or decide for the king upon an appropriate and auspicious time for a certain action. Anvari, who was one of Nezāmi's contemporaries, besides being the court poet of Sanjar, was a great astrologer also. He ventured on a forecast which proved disastrous to himself.

According to Tazkeratosh Sho'arā of Doulat Shāh, it happened that in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185) the seven planets were at one time in the sign of Libra. The astronomers predicted gales of such severity during that year as would destroy all the buildings and even uproot the mountains. In this forecast Anvari was more insistent in his warnings than all the other astronomers. The people, to protect their lives and property, dug cellars to take refuge from the impending calamity. They took their belongings into those cellars and lived under the earth, and it seemed as though there was no habitation on the earth's surface. But it happened that those predicted days were so calm and there was so little wind during the whole of that time that the villagers could not winnow their harvest. The Tazkeratosh Sho'arā adds that though the destructive gale did not arise, yet in the same year Changiz Khān became a chieftain over his tribe in Turān and in a short time became an independent ruler. Consequently he invaded Persia, and his ravages were carried to such an extent that most of the countries of Turkestān, Transoxiana and Khorāsān became uninhabited.

On page 63, line 3, we find him a great sage and moralist. He tells us that the more one knows the less one should speak; that we should not say a hundred things for every one we know, but say one thing for every hundred. If one wants words to have any effect, one must say little; the more one talks the more one is liable to censure and correction. "Speech," he says, "is a pearl and the speaker a diver. Pure pearls can be obtained

with great difficulty only. Those who know best the value of a perfect pearl will guard it jealously."

He advises us to behave in the world in such a manner that we should be immune from censure, no matter whether we are drunk or sober. He asks us not to spend one moment of our life in negligence and not to harm anyone or hurt the feelings of others. There is no instance recorded of any of his contemporaries attacking Nezāmi's moral character or mode of life. Nothing but praise has come down to us. Even when he is embittered against his enemies, he never mentions their names. We hear his complaints but no abuse or retaliation. He lived an unblemished life of purity, piety, and self-sacrifice.

On page 205, line 5, we find him satisfied with poverty. He knows that if, after a hundred years, people asked, where is Nezāmi, every couplet of his would raise its voice, saying, "Here I am." He gives a vivid description of his life and tells us how he spends his time at nights. No night does he go to sleep without obtaining a new pearl from the treasure of divine wisdom. He compares himself to a miner, mining for jewels at night, and tells us not only to look upon his jewels but also upon his toils. He even describes the manner in which he tossed about in bed in order to produce or paint another picture. He deprived himself of rest and pleasure to give others ease and delight. He complains how, after untold privations and toil, he produced his work and sent it to the king, and received in return a handful of barley. He invokes the help of God to protect him and grant him patience, lest he should say a word contrary to his ideals and principles of life. He has a certainty and assurance of God's protection, and considers his asceticism to be a golden armour against all onslaughts. Many of his enemies attack him, but they harm themselves. They are his enemies, only because they cannot produce poetry as good as his. They are jealous of him, steal his poetry, pretending it to be

their own. But he does not mind it ; he rains his love and blessings on all, friends and foes alike. His teaching curiously resembles the ethics and standards of both Christian and Mohammanan saints.

On page 205, line 20, we find his complaints more outspoken. He finds himself obliged to imitate the sonorous and dreary tunes of others, to praise the unworthy, to make an eagle of a sparrow. He does not hope to find anything else except " vacant eyes from the crow ". He gets but poison from the snake. With one ear he hears bitter words, whilst on the other ear he keeps the ring of servitude. With great patience and tolerance he manages to live. He says that any light coming from other countries is tenderly attended to, but if a candle of ambergris should be lighted in Ganjeh, they all rush to put it out. He was obliged to receive poison in exchange for his noble and beautiful thoughts. From his lap he has scattered pearls, and receives stones of ridicule. In short, he says : " By my tongue the mouths of the people are sweetened, but my mouth is bitter with a deadly poison." His complaints are justified ; he is asked by kings and ruling princes to immortalize their names ; he feels they are not worthy of praise, yet he must bestow upon them with a lavish hand. Instead of any recompense or reward, he receives abuse. He knows the great dignity and wealth of other poets inferior to him, working for other rulers in other parts of Persia.

On page 203, line 16, we find Nezāmi in his saddest mood. He has lost his wife, the daughter of the ruler of Darband. He was deeply in love with her, and we can picture him wailing and lamenting his irreparable loss. He describes her as most beautiful, wise and full of piety, living with him in perfect love and utmost harmony. She died in her youth and left him a son, who is seven years old at the death of his mother.

On page 192, line 23, he addresses his son and tells him to think of his position in the world, saying :

" I brought thee up ; God gave the provision.
May God's name and not my name guard thee."

He advises him to be as happy as he has been previously himself, and not to sit in the path of the accusation of enemies. He tells him to strive hard for learning, in order that he may get worldly possessions ; to omit all which pertains to desire, and to engage in the knowledge which is divine, in such a manner that everyone should say, " What a wonderful son Nezāmi has brought up." This is the first time that he has addressed his son. We find him a loving father, showering tenderness, kindness, and advice upon his son in a spirit of friendship and companionship. His desire is that everyone who sees his son should recognize in him a replica of himself in divine wisdom and piety. He wishes to dispel from his son the feeling of sadness and create in him joy and happiness. He teaches him from childhood that, although he has brought him up, yet God is the all-provider. He is most anxious that his son should not frequent the company of bad associates. He rightly stresses the usefulness of committing words to memory, even though the boy may not know the meaning yet.

On page 65, line 14, we find Nezāmi over forty years old. He says that the pleasure and pride of youth have departed, that life's pleasure extends to forty years, and that he is now past it and lost the vigour of his youth. This also proves that our previous calculation is correct. After the completion of the Khosrou Shirin, for about two or three years we do not hear anything about the life of the poet. He was disappointed in Toghrel and the Atābek Mohammad. The Atābek, Abu Ja'far Mohammad, died A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), and his brother, Qezel Arsalān, succeeded him. Nezāmi, being disappointed in every direction, writes a eulogy to Qezel Arsalān. He asks the morning breeze to kiss the threshold of the king when it passes it and to tell the king that, although

Nezāmi has been prevented from attending the king's court, he has not been estranged from the king's service, and now that he has completed his work, he has dedicated it to the king. Evidently, Nezami has been asked to dedicate his book to him. He has not been in the king's court for some time, and the excuse he gives shows that he has been engaged in writing the eulogy and probably reorganising and extending the romance of Khosrou Shirin, one of the apparent extensions is his beautiful and sorrowful elegy on the death of his wife. She must have died after A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), as it would be inconceivable to imagine that the poet could have been capable of painting the beautiful and gorgeous scenes of the loves of Khosrou and Shirin after his loss. The reading of the romance of Khosrou Shirin convinces us that it must have been the product of a heart untouched by sorrow.

On page 206, line 11, we find Nezāmi has not yet received any favours for his toil. He has been promised great wealth, and none of the promises have been kept. He has been given to understand that he would have a royal horse with gold and bejewelled trappings; that he would have treasure, ten slaves and five handmaidens. He does not complain of these broken promises but laments the death of the Atābek Mohammad. The reason of his poverty is the death of the Atābek, and if he had lived long enough, he would amply have repaid his toils. Whilst he was in this sorrowful state a messenger entered with a letter in his hand. After the exchange of salutations, he sat down by him. He told him that the royal train had approached to within a distance of 30 farsakhs, and that he should make haste and prepare himself for a month's journey; that he should close the door and leave the key behind, because the king wished to see him for a few days. He handed the letter to Nezāmi, saying, "This is the king's decree." He took the letter, kissed it three times, placed it on his brow

as a sign of obedience, and started on the journey. He rode on a horse which seems to have been his own. He describes his great joy and happiness at the thought of seeing the king. When he reached the king's quarters, the messenger went in and informed the king of the arrival of Nezāmi. The king told his lord chamberlain, Shamsod-Din Mohammad, to make haste and bring that pious and holy man in quickly. Shamsod-Din Mohammad came out and took the poet to the king. Then the poet describes the splendour of the court; the king was seated on his throne, wearing his crown; before him were huge jars of wine; minstrels and beautiful girls were singing the odes of Nezāmi in harmony to the harp; whilst his cup-bearers had bowls of wine in their hands. Nezāmi entered and was presented to the king. The king's joy at the sight of Nezāmi was indescribable. He respected the piety and abstinence of the poet and ordered that the wine should be taken away. He dismissed the services of the cup-bearers and the minstrels, and gave orders that until the evening he wished to remain engaged with Nezāmi and not with harp and bowl, saying that the melody of Nezāmi's rhyme was sweeter to him than that of the harp. He compared Nezāmi with the Prophet Khezr, saying: "Since Khezr has come, we must turn away from the wine, because we obtain the water of life from Khezr." When Nezāmi entered the presence of the king, he was overawed, and with fear he went forward to kiss the king's foot, and whilst his head was bent down, the king rose from his seat and embraced him, treated him with the utmost respect and kindness, and asked him to be seated. Then Nezāmi explains the sweetness of his speeches and the way he kept the king in joy and laughter. "My melody intoxicated the cup-bearers and the minstrels." When the conversation turned upon Khosrou and Shirin, the king's joy increased still more. He placed his arm round Nezāmi and began to praise and congratulate him on the production of his romance.

The king had already read Khosrou Shirin and knew well many of the scenes. Whilst the king was talking about incidents in the romance, he would, every now and then, tell Nezāmi what a wonderful art of eloquence he had created, and how the king's name would remain alive through that work. After this wonderful and gracious reception, the king told him that it was incumbent upon him and his late brother to make ample provision for his livelihood. He asked what treasure, jewellery, and money did his brother give him in return for the book on which he spent so many years of his life. He also told him that he had heard that his brother was going to give him a village, asking him whether he had received it or not, and whether they had sent him the title deeds. The question was delicate, direct, and embarrassing to Nezāmi, and it required all the faculties of the poet to handle the situation. It seems that the late king had actually given a village to Nezāmi, and that after his death the village had been taken away from him, probably by some powerful chieftain or courtier. One can guess this by the way in which Nezāmi answered the king. First he says that the fault must remain on the shoulders of Providence in taking away from the world the late king so quickly, and that, anyhow, he did not compose the work for the sake of reward. He devised his work in order that it might remain, and that everyone who read it should praise the composer and ask for God's blessing on him. Next he says that the blessed king did give him a village from his own personal property, but his object in composing that sweet romance was a pretext for the praise of the king, and that when the king passed away, the whole world's hope was lost. In the end he says that under such a king as rules now he was sure to be favoured and be able to live in ease and comfort. When the king heard him, he became still more gracious and bestowed upon him the village of Hamdāniyān. The India Office MS. 402 gives the name of

the village as Hamduniyān. He gave him the title-deeds of the village, signed and sealed with the royal signature and seal. He wrote that he had settled that village upon him and after him upon his descendants, and that it should remain his absolute property without taxation up to the day of judgment. The king, further, bestowed upon Nezāmi royal robes of honour, and money, and sent him back home to his monastic retreat.

On page 208, line 20, we find that a jealous person sneers and belittles the reward Nezāmi obtained. In order to annoy the poet, he starts sympathising with him, saying : " Could they not have given him a better village than that small furnace whose length and breadth is only half a farsakh ? " Nezāmi answers that he is grateful for the favours he has received from his benefactor, and that the king wished to give him a village for his services, and he was quite happy to receive it. When, therefore, the giver and receiver were both happy and content with the transaction, there was no need for others to interest themselves in the matter.

On page 209, line 8, we find a sorrowful elegy on the death of Qezel Arsalān, condoling his nephew and successor, Mo'aiyad Nosratod-Din Abu Bakr, the son of Atābek Mohammad. He laments that Qezel Arsalān did not reign long, that he did not partake of or enjoy the fruit of the garden of youth, and that he was murdered. He sends his prayers and blessings for the departed king and also his successor, the reigning Nosratod-Din. He brings this elegy to an end and says :

" May his soul be a companion of happiness

Whoso says : ' May the mercy of God be upon
Nezāmi. ' "

As we saw previously, the Khosrou Shirin was composed during the years A.H. 580-81 (A.D. 1184-85). It was written after the Makhzanol Asrār, therefore it must have been begun after A.H. 580 (A.D. 1184), and as it was presented to the Atābek, Abu Ja'far Mohammad,

who died in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), it must have been completed before that date.

Nezāmi's eulogy on Qezel Arsalān must have been written after his accession to power in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), and before his death in A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191); and the elegy on the death of Qezel Arsalān must have been composed after A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191), i.e. after the death of that monarch. These must, therefore, have been added to the Khosrou Shirin a few years after its completion.

I have not followed the order of the pages as I found them in the Teheran edition but taken my material in the chronological order, in which I think it should have been arranged. Dr. Rieu quotes a couplet in the Catalogue of the British Museum, Persian Manuscripts, Vol. II, p. 566, and says he has taken it from the MSS. Add. 7729, fol. 81a, Add. 25,900, fol. 97b, Add. 27,260, fol. 109b, and other old copies, as well as from the Teheran edition, giving the date A.H. 576 (A.D. 1180-81) for the completion of Khosrou Shirin. This, however, cannot be correct, firstly, because the couplet is given in the Teheran edition in two different forms and places, the second hemistichs of both couplets being the same, but their first ones different. Secondly, the couplet in the India Office MS. 402 does not give that date. Thirdly, the couplet in the India Office 'MS. and one of the couplets of the Teheran edition are given in the scene where the friend of the poet comes in and rebukes him for reviving old stories of the Zoroastrians. These two couplets in the last two copies are also quite different in their second hemistichs and slightly different in their first ones. No matter which reading of the different copies we take, the second hemistich is meaningless. On casually reading it, we think it has some meaning, because we expect it, but in reading it very carefully, we find it impossible to attach any sensible meaning to it. I am, therefore, convinced that it cannot possibly have been written by Nezāmi. In order to

show this more clearly, I give the couplets as found in the different copies :

British Museum MS. Add. 7729, fol. 81a.

گذشته پانصد و هفتاد و شش سال
نzd بر خط خوبان کس چنین فال

India Office MS. 402, fol. 44a, 12.

پس از پنجاه ساله در چهل سال
من ز پنجه در این حرف ورق مال

Teheran edition—

(a) p. 64, 120.

پس از پنجاه چهل سال در چهل سال
نzd بر خط خوبان کس چنین فال

(b) p. 204, 125.

گذشته پانصد و هفتاد و شش سال
نzd بر خط خوبان کس چنین فال

Moreover, as I have conclusively proved that the romance of Khosrou Shirin was begun after A.H. 580 (A.D. 1184) and the elegy on the death of Qezel Arsalañ written after A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191), Dr. Rieu is wrong, in the Catalogue of the British Museum, Persian Manuscripts, Vol. II, p. 566, in saying that A.H. 576 (A.D. 1180) is the precise date of the completion of Khosrou Shirin.

MATERIAL FROM LEILI AND MAJNUN

On page 212, line 4, we find Nezāmi thinking of death. He seems to have been very ill but does not fear death, because death is the road to God. Death to him is a garden and pleasure ground which takes him to the "House of the Beloved." He prays that, if God desires him to die, he may die, as death is the journey of the soul.

He would submit willingly to the sleep which leads the way to "the Beloved." Since the yearning for the union with God has kindled his heart, he would die happily, knowing that he would rise equally happy.

On page 213, line 1, we find him still praising the four Caliphs, saying Seddiq (Abu Bakr) was the forerunner of truth, Fāruq (Omar) had surpassed the zenith of heaven, and that godly and God-fearing old man (Osmān) was a "classmate" of the Lion of God (Ali). "All four came from one source and were sweet herbs grown on the same verdant bank, and 'the Empire of Religion' was established by these four Caliphs, and the House of the Faith obtained its four quarters through them."

On page 217, line 1, we have a glowing description of the poet's life. He was sitting one day full of happiness and joy, his own divān in front of him. It was during the time of the rose and of the morning breeze, blowing and bringing him perfume. He had obtained his heart's desire, and the fame of his eloquence had spread in every direction. It came to his mind that it was the time for him to work, because fortune and prosperity were both his companions, and now his mind (unfettered and unchecked by worldly cares) could produce wonderful scenes. He braces himself to be tolerant and fall into line with the affairs of the world. Suddenly a messenger arrives and brings him a letter of 10 or 15 lines, written in a beautiful handwriting by the king, Shirvān Shāh, himself.

The letter is addressed to Nezāmi, saying : " Oh thou, the master magician of eloquence, Nezāmi, produce another high achievement through the magic of thy poetry." He asks him in his letter to compose the romance of Leili and Majnun and encourages him by saying that this romance was the king of all love stories, and it was fitting that it should be composed by him alone. He further told him that he had read his works and valued them, and extolled his poetry beyond that of older poets. In the conclusion of his letter the king particularly, but delicately, mentioned that he wished the book to be dedicated to him, and that, as he was from a noble stock, he wished his eulogy to be worthy of his birth. He knew, if Nezāmi wrote a eulogy on him, he would acquire eternal fame. He promised the poet to reward him richly. Nezāmi read the letter and found himself in a great quandary. He did not dare to disobey the request, nor did he have material enough for the composition of the romance. He also found himself growing old and weak. He did not know with whom he could discuss the subject, when his son, Mohammad, who was as dear to him as his life, took the letter from him, kissed his foot lovingly and sat beside him. He told his father that his fame had spread everywhere, that he had written Khosrou Shirin and filled the hearts of many people with love and happiness, and that he could and should compose the romance of Leili and Majnun, because Shirvān Shāh had specially requested him to do so.

We know, therefore, for certain that the Khosrou Shirin was written before Leili and Majnun. The poet addressed his son with great love and tenderness. He praised his beauty and determination. He explained the difficulties of his task, saying that he had many engagements and that the subject was not familiar to him. In the end he agreed to compose it and said that the door of his treasure house was opened by his son. He completed the romance of Leili and Majnun in four

months in A.H. 584 (A.D. 1188) and said that, had he nothing else to do, he would have finished those couplets, exceeding 4000, in a fortnight. He sent it by his son to Abol Mozaffar Akhsetān Shirvān Shāh. He also wrote, on page 221, a eulogy on the heir apparent, Menuchehr, saying that his son had entreated him to be recommended to the prince.

On page 222, he hopes that the prince, the son of Malek Mo'azzam Akhsetān Shirvān Shāh, will read the Shāh Nāmeh and learn the sayings of the wise, and that he will find in the romance of Leili and Majnun a secret treasure, hidden in a casket, like the full moon in the constellation of the stars. He calls his book his daughter and tells the prince that no one in the whole world could create at any time a more beautiful maiden, and that, if the prince did not have any regard for her father, he might look with favour upon her brother (Nezāmi's son). Incidentally he gives on the same page his own exact age, saying that he was seven times seven when he produced this bewitching song. This reference to his age of 49 years seems to indicate that this particular passage was written in A.H. 588 (A.D. 1192), (the date erroneously given in some manuscripts as the date for the completion of Leili and Majnun). It was shown that he completed the Makhzanol Asrār in A.H. 580 (A.D. 1184), and at that time he was 40 years of age. Supposing Makhzanol Asrār was completed in the first few months of A.H. 580 (April-July A.D. 1184), he would, in the latter months of A.H. 588 (A.D. 1192), have completed his 48th year and entered his 49th year.

On the same page he speaks proudly of himself and says :

" Exult, oh heart, because now is the time to be enraptured.

" Why should the master of eloquence be silent? "

He says, justly, that the arena of poetry is his alone

to-day, without question, that he earns his wages by his own toil, and that, if he is wealthy, his wealth is of the mind only. He also says that he is so perfect in the spells of the poetic art, that he is called the "Mirror of Mystery." His tongue is like "a sword in eloquence and possesses the life-giving elixir of the Messiah." His speech "produces such an effect that the root of a surd is found." The arid land of poetry becomes irrigated and refreshed by him as by a stream, and poetry rises to fame in his day. He makes light of his opponents who steal his poetry and says that he would rather people partook from his table than he from the tables of others. Once more in this passage he refers to his odes. He compares himself with an ocean which cannot be polluted. He says that although his face blushes for the misdeeds of his enemies, yet he will wash their sins off in an ocean and forgive them not with a soured but with a smiling face. The thief steals from him and calls him a thief instead. He says, if he has ever plagiarised others, may his accusations against others bring him ill luck. He possesses the treasures of both worlds, and it does not become him to notice the theft of a poor knave. He wishes to give alms to the poor and does not mind whether they steal or claim them. He gives his own name, Elyās, and he says further that all persons of fame in the world have enemies; Joseph could not escape the jealousy of his brothers, nor could Jesus the cruelty of the Jews, whilst Mohammad had to suffer from Abu Lahab. He mentions that all his life he has never harmed even the wing of an ant and never wished for the misfortune of others. He wishes to hide his wrath and to think that, even what he has said in anger, though it was done for the improvement of his detractors only, would have better been unsaid. He asks his heart to silence all its complaints, that he might suffer wrong with a pleasant face, to let him kiss the hand that slaps his face, and to let him suffer harm and do no harm.

Next we have his advice to his son who is now fourteen years old. He draws his son's attention to the time when he was seven years of age. He tells him not to lead a life of negligence and not to waste his time in play, but to acquire knowledge and virtue, wisdom and greatness, nor to depend upon his father's fame for greatness but to acquire it himself. He urges him to be polite to everybody, to fear God, and to refrain from doing anything he need be ashamed of.

He dissuades him from engaging in the art of poetry, saying he could not find fame in that art, as that was reserved for him only. He persuades him to study his own soul together with theology and medicine. He wishes his son to be a doctor, life-giving like Jesus, and not life-taking, to be a theologian full of devotion and piety and not full of conceit and hypocrisy. He again advises him to learn the meaning of every page he reads and, in whatever profession he engages, to learn it well, even were it only the making of saddles for donkeys.

On page 224 we have the most beautiful Sāqi Nāmeh ever written by any poet of Persia. In this Sāqi Nāmeh, and in every other part of his works, whenever he speaks of wine, he immediately explains that he means divine love. By wine he means "that wine which is pure as his tears and which is lawful in the religion of lovers of God". He means that wine "which is the water of life, which gives speech to the dumb, which is the light to guide travellers, and which is the key to the treasure of happiness which annihilates him and unites him with the Beloved." In this Sāqi Nāmeh we find his father's name, Yusof, the son of Zaki, the son of Mo'aiyad. His mother, Ra'iseh, had been a daughter of a Kurdish chieftain, and it seems as if he had been brought up by his maternal uncle, Khājeh Hasan. The Bombay lithographed edition gives Khājeh

Omar as the name of his uncle. He wishes to forget his past life which has been full of grief and sorrow. He does not wish to be an instrument in the hands of the mean and the low and to be compelled to submit to their oppression. He will leave off associating with kings and shun their company, be satisfied with his own portion and not look for his daily bread from the table of others. He wishes to teach himself to be happy and content with what he has. He prefers to give his horse up and to walk on foot; to carry the heavy burdens of others brings joy to him beyond anything else.

On page 233, line 12, and page 236, line 5, we find two instances where "Leili" is rhymed with "keili" (meaning *very*) and "meili" (meaning *a desire*), which shows that the word should be pronounced as I have transliterated it, and not as "Laili" as transliterated by Dr. Rieu and "Laylā" by Professor Browne. We find the same pronunciation, Leili, in Hāfez and other poets.

On page 310, line 22, in the conclusion of Leili and Majnun, where he calls himself the adviser of the divine helper, we feel the importance and the high esteem in which he is held as adviser of the king, Shirvān Shāh. He counsels the king that he should, night and day, seek after good fame rather than anything else, and avoid drinking wine, though wine may be lawful for him. He mentions that his romance of Leili and Majnun, a hidden pearl, a bestower of understanding to a thousand distracted ones, was completed, by the grace of the God of Glory and Triumph, on a Monday, 588 years after the Hejrat of the Prophet (A.D. 1192).

In the Teheran edition, on page 218, line 23-24, which we also find in the India Office MS. 402 and the British Museum MSS., we have the date given as the end of Rajab A.H. 584 (A.D. 1188). The only way we can interpret these two dates is that Nezāmi, after the completion of Khosrou Shirin in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), had been requested by Akhsetān Shirvān Shāh to compose

for him the romance of Leili and Majnun, which he did in four months.

Then in A.H. 588 (A.D. 1192) he wrote the advice to his own son who was then 14 years of age, together with the eulogy and advice to the then ruling king. He could not have written these in A.H. 584, because, as we saw previously, before the completion of Khosrou Shirin his son was seven years old, and in A.H. 584 (A.D. 1188) he would have been 10, not 14 years of age. Further, the date of A.H. 588, when the son was 14 years of age, is another indication that the Khosrou Shirin was completed in A.H. 581, and the advice to his son, when he was 7 years old, must have been written in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185). These dates are interdependent and confirm each other.

This is another instance of the incorrect and misleading statements of all biographers, Persian and others, with whom I have any acquaintance. In his Literary History of Persia, Vol. II, page 400, Professor Browne says that he has taken his material from Dr. Wilhelm Bacher's very careful and scholarly monograph on Nezāmi, and gives the date of the composition of the romance of Khosrou Shirin as A.H. 571 (A.D. 1175). This cannot be correct, because we have just seen that Nezāmi composed the romance of Khosrou Shirin in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), and the advice to his son in Khosrou Shirin in the same year.

MATERIAL FROM BAHRĀM NĀMEH OR HAFT PEIKAR

On page 313, line 1, Nezāmi professes disbelief in astrology. He says: "How could a star be of good or evil omen. If a star could bring happiness, then the

King Kei-Qobād would have been the son of an astrologer. Which of the astrologers has ever found a treasure by his calculations? " He says he has gone into all the intricacies of star-knowledge, together with all other secret sciences, and in the end, when he found God, he found no more use for them. He asks God to befriend him at His threshold, to make him independent, to grant help for his needs, and not to leave him to the mercy of others. Since in youth he did not desert the threshold of God and beg at the door of others, God sent others to his door, and although he did not wish for glory, God granted it to him.

He thus addresses God directly :

" Since I have grown old at the gate of Thy House,
Protect me against my own fears."

He is certain that God is his, and so he possesses the whole world. He does not wish to tell his secrets to God, because God knows them anyhow. In telling his secrets to the world he lowers himself ; in telling them to God he is elevated. This passage, indeed, throws a vivid light on the mind and consequent manner of life of the poet. He does not believe in astrology, but, as mentioned before, he was himself well versed in astronomy. It shows that from his youth he had chosen a life of privation and devotion to God, and that he had grown old when he wrote this book.

On page 315, line 21, we find he has received a secret request from the King Alā'od-Din Qezel Arsalān, of the line of Āqsonqor, to dedicate a book to him. When the messenger presented this request, he forgot his sorrows and became happy again. In planning this new work of his, he starts by paying a high and noble tribute to the genius of Ferdousi whose Shāh Nāmeh provides him with a starting point for his romance. He says that from that cluster of rubies little particles have been left over, and that from these bits he built up, like a jeweller, the treasure of Haft Peikar. He says whatever Ferdousi had

left incomplete, he completed ; and whatever he found correct, he left as it was. He had searched for a book of history all over the world. He mentions both Arabic and Persian, and specially names Bokhāri and Tabari, and other works which he found in different libraries. Every page which fell into his hand he collected and, tying them all up in a handkerchief, he took them home and used them for this romance.

He compares himself with the oyster and the older historians with a rain cloud, saying that, whatever drops of rain he receives from the cloud, he converts into pearls. The king had asked him to keep the composition of this romance an absolute secret shared by the king and the poet alone. He is happy in dreaming that, when he should present his offering to the king, the king, like Solomon, would bestow upon him his seal and treasures. Then immediately he rebukes himself in saying :

“ Oh Nezāmi, thy eloquence is for thee Messiah enough.

Thy knowledge is the Tree of the Virgin Mary for thee.

May thy heart forget all thought of wealth
And thy mind expel all worldly desires ! ”

In this passage again we find the king of the time approaching Nezāmi with his treasures and promises, in order that he may compose and dedicate a book to him. He mentions the sources of his material, showing that he wrote with a deep knowledge and after much study. In the conclusion of the above passage we find him independent of wealth and fortune, loftily and nobly contented. The king who had requested him cannot be Qezel Arsalān, the Atābek of Āzarbāijān, who died in A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191), but as he has mentioned him as being Alā'od-Din of the line of Āqsonqor, he must be either the Atābek of Musel, Nurod-Din Arsalān Shāh, who reigned from A.H. 589 (A.D. 1193) till A.H. 607 (A.D. 1210-11), or Mansur Mohammad of the kings of Armenia, who reigned from A.H. 594 to A.H. 603 (A.D. 1198-1206).

On page 320, line 2, he complains of the way he is treated by people. He says that he possesses a village, but yet he does not enjoy the produce of his property. If he enters anybody's house as a guest, they do not even spread the table for him. His complaint is mostly against those people who belittle his intellect, while they themselves have no intellectual capacity. He goes the way he is driven, and feels hurt that wealth and prosperity are obtained by luck and not by virtue. Next he prays to God that his piety and devotion may save him from the fire of jealousy, and that he may not be moved to envy by the prosperity of the undeserving.

On the following page he gives advice to his son. He tells him to awake, because he himself is going to sleep (meaning he is approaching his end). He enjoins his son to acquire good fame, so that the poet who is imprisoned in the city may obtain more honour and respect. He tells him not to be afraid of difficulties and misfortunes, but to meet his troubles always with a heart full of courage and determination, because the interpretation of many a bad dream is prosperity and good omen. He asks him to keep his covenant with God, to have no fear of any misfortune which may befall him, and not to be ashamed of acquiring knowledge, because through education only, physical and spiritual advancement is obtained. There are numerous instances in the Five Treasures where Nezāmi refers to himself as being imprisoned in the city, yet there is not one allusion to the reason of this confinement. It is inconceivable that he should have been kept by force in the city by any ruling monarch. I believe this confinement was of his own free will; perhaps he did not wish to leave the city of Ganjeh and find a new abode among strangers, thinking it might lead to misfortunes. Perhaps there were also economical reasons to make his residence near his village, Hamdāniyān, desirable. Also the reign of terror due to the Assassins may have been a contributory cause.

Piety, godliness, and the acquirement of good fame are the predominant ideals of the poet. His ideas of education are contrary to those of Sa'di, but in accordance with modern theory. He believed that the seed of education would bring forth fruit, no matter on what ground it was sown. The rigid and severe life of devotion, self-sacrifice, study, and hard work had made him prematurely old, and he feels the weight of his years.

On page 322, line 2, he mentions that youth has departed from him; his cheeks have become yellow and his hair white. He has become weak in body, and he feels that he is a changed man. He says that, whilst young, he lived the life of the aged, and that his present condition could well be imagined.

In this connection we have one of his sayings, which has become a household proverb in Persia :

“ If this is the face of the ugly little Ahmad,
What will he look like when he gets small-pox
as well? ”

He does not, however, lose courage, and considers his excellence and virtue a strong fortress protecting him from all onslaughts. He admits that, although he has lost his youth, yet the desires of youth are still with him. His body is old, yet his heart is still full of youthful desires. He does not know whether this temperament is peculiar to him, or whether everyone is afflicted with the same calamity.

On the same page, line 9, he prays to God that he may not be tempted to humble himself at the threshold of others, that He may keep him content with what he has. He would rather spread his table to others than partake of the fare of strangers. He calls upon himself to work hard and, by his endeavours, to open to the world the gate of his treasure house. We find the poet's life a continuous struggle, a life spent in hard work and in unbroken, placid contentment, independence, and trust that God Almighty will protect him against ill treatment and

the calumny of his enemies. His mind is noble and generous and prefers always to give rather than to take.

On page 420 Nezāmi asks for God's generosity and protection. He knows that by God's grace his name has become famous, but he prays to be kept famous for righteousness. He prays that he may be protected from doing anything which would bring regret for him on entering the presence of God.

Though apparently from worldly motives he dedicated his book to the king, his real object was to take away his eyes from the less worthy objects of earthly comfort and prosperity; these did not confer real happiness and comfort to a mind which was more worthily engaged.

On page 431, line 17, in concluding the romance of the Haft Peikar, he addresses the king again and mentions that he is imprisoned in the city, and the way of escape is closed in front and behind, so he sends his romance by a messenger. He completed the work on the 14th of Ramazān, 4 hours after sunrise, in A.H. 593 (July 31, 1197). We have the same reading in the British Museum MSS. Add. 7729, fol. 1926, Add. 16,780, fol. 211a, Add. 25,900, fol. 205a, Or. 1363, fol. 224, and there is no doubt that this date is correct. The India Office MS. gives the date as *bā sād hā*, which makes 100, but this is evidently a mistake. ✓

MATERIAL FROM THE BOOK OF ALEXANDER

(a) SHARAF NAMEH

On page 433, line 9, we have a good description of the poet's life. God is in his mind night and day, morning and evening; at the beginning of the night, when he wishes to go to sleep, he praises God; when he awakes at midnight he calls upon God and sheds tears. In the morning his road leads towards God, and the whole day until evening God is his refuge. His only hope is that, when he leaves this world, and his body is decayed,

decomposed, transformed, and when the wind has scattered his dust, God may then, from the threshold of His heavenly kingdom, keep his name alive amongst the living. This prayer God has most generously answered.

On page 434, line 3, he asks God to protect him against the desire for worldly pomp and glory. He asks to be given gratitude first and then treasure, patience first and only then misfortunes. On the same page, line 23, we still find him a rigid Sunni. He writes in praise of the Prophet and brings forward the four friends of the Prophet as his witnesses.

On page 437, line 6, he wishes to sacrifice the jewel of his heart to the Prophet and sings the praises of his four friends. Although he is firm in his love for Ali, he is not without love for Omar. To the eyes of his mind Abu Bakr is a candle and Osmān a lamp.

On the same page, line 12, Nezāmi gives another vivid description of his life. One night he had risen from his sleep for his night prayers, the moon was shining brilliantly, and the air was filled with the scent of flowers and the perfume of roses. The sound of the caravan had died away, and the whole earth was as if dead. His night companions were asleep, and after his prayers Nezāmi again went to bed. He detached his mind from all worldly care and became absorbed in a sea of thoughts. He closed his eyes in order to keep his mind awake for concentration on his next composition. Whilst thinking of old histories, and whence to draw his material, his thoughts began to wander and he fell asleep. He dreamt that he was in a beautiful garden picking fruit and sharing it with everyone whom he saw. The dream of the garden vanished from his mind when he heard the mo'azzen's call to prayer. Again his first thought returned while now fully awake. This dream exercised a powerful influence over him and urged him to proceed to the composition of the Eskandar Nāmeh. Again he refers to mean and unworthy people who steal his poetry.

On page 438, line 16, we find him satisfied and happy, because no one has accused him of robbing others of the fruit of their work. They steal his poetry openly and take it from Ganjeh to Bokhārā where they sell it cheaply, "because stolen property is cheap." He is certain that the thieves will be caught, and although he, from whom the property is stolen, does not complain, yet the thief will get his deserts. He does not take the law into his own hands, nor does he complain to anyone in authority. He leaves it to Providence who is the best avenger of evil.

On page 438, line 21, the poet asks the cup-bearer to give him the divine wine, the elixir of forgetfulness. Next he returns to the happy consciousness of how his fame has spread everywhere, and though he has become old, yet the vigour of youth persists.

The poet, in the romance of Eskandar Nāmeh, often talks of his old age. On the following page, line 7, his youth has departed and carried away the pleasures of life, but he does not regret it. His sinews have become weak and his bones brittle. The wind of autumn has entered the garden of his life. He calls himself the old nightingale lamenting the withering of the red rose. His stature is bent with old age. At the age of 50 his constitution is impaired; his cheeks have lost their bloom and become sallow. His feet have become feeble, and his nature demands more rest and sleep. He has lost the key of happiness, and his heart often inclines towards the time for his departure. He cannot now live a life of youth and vigour, as even in his youth he lived a life of old age and humble devotion. He says, if he could afford it, he would retire and live with ease and comfort. The severe discipline and mode of living, the foregoing of all pleasures and most of the necessities of life, continuous hard work and study, sleeplessness on account of his long prayers at night, seem to have made the poet feel old at an age not much over 50 years. He is very proud and fond of his great fame. It is possible, how-

ever; and most probable, that this passage was written during the composition of the second part of the Eskandar Nāmeh, i.e. in A.H. 599 (A.D. 1202-03), when, as it will be shown, when we are dealing with that last composition of his, he was sixty years old. Both parts of the Eskandar Nāmeh are of the same metre, and it is possible that after his death, when his works were collected, some of the passages were misplaced.

On page 439, line 25, we find the poet a spiritualist in the most modern sense of the word. His ideas closely conform with those of Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He asks us, when we pass his grave and see that his body has turned to dust, and that his dust has been scattered by the wind in every direction and has been forgotten by the world, that we should lay our hands upon his resting place and remember his pure spirit. We should then pray for him, and he would send us his blessing down from heaven. He tells us that, whatever we would pray for, he would ask God to grant it; that if we take the journey to his grave, he would take the journey from heaven and come down to meet us. He wishes us to consider him as alive as ourselves, and tells us that, although we do not see him, yet he sees us. Further on he asks us, on the same page, that when we reach his resting place, we should fill our cup with wine and walk towards his grave. He explains that by wine he does not mean the material wine but divine love and self-forgetfulness. His cup-bearer is the promise of God and his morning drink is annihilation. He swears that all his life he has never polluted his lips with material wine, and says :

“ If I have ever defiled my mouth with wine,
May God make everything which is lawful unlawful
to me.”

Then he again addresses the cup-bearer, telling him to awake and give the pure wine to the pure lover, the wine which is as clear as water and is lawful in every religion.

The India Office MS. 402 gives "the four religions" instead of "every religion". As we have shown previously, when we were dealing with his romance of Leili and Majnun, Nezāmi followed his religious precepts most strictly; he was a total abstainer, and never in his life tasted the forbidden wine. His source of inspiration, contrary to nearly all other Persian poets, was his devotion and love for the Deity and not material wine.

On page 440, line 9, he advises us not to sit in the seat of the great, until we have become great. Then he says, that on account of his good nature, his affairs are in disorder, hinting that his poetry is being stolen by other poets, and that the poets before him kept thieves at bay by the violence of their natures; but he does not wish to do so. He says, why should he paint himself black in order to frighten the children on the road. He is happy that he was created with a loving nature, and wishes to continue to live so. He is happy, not only because he has bestowed a pearl on every one, but also because he has immortalized his own name. Next he tells us to listen to many poets who have praised him and have called him the lord of eloquence. He is far removed from the intrigues of people, is far above others in intellect, yet he is the humblest of all.

In his works Nezāmi often complains of the thieves who steal his poetry, and this seems to have been a continual source of irritation to him. He compares his heart to fire which radiates more light the more it is fed by thorns. He takes no notice of his enemies' abuses and makes them friends by returning good for evil.

He gives the goodness of his nature as a reason for his great fame and is sure that, even when he dies, his grave will be a place of pilgrimage. Here we find a true picture of Nezāmi, as painted by himself.

Further on, on the same page, he tells us that he has no desire for gold and treasures, because he believes that he who is poorer is richer. Worldly belongings, in

his opinion, are a source of trouble. He who possesses little, has little to worry about.

On page 431*, line 17, we have another true description of the poet's life. He is weary of a strenuous life and longs for rest. We hear him once more choosing a life of seclusion and retirement. His retirement from the world this time is complete and absolute. He locks the door of his house and shuts himself up from the world. He does not know, nor does he want to know, what is happening outside. He compares himself to a dead man who is carried along in the caravan of the world. He relies on God for his sustenance, and says that, if he had the ability, he would supply the need of all the needy ones. He mentions that from fear of death he dares not lift his head, but we are not told the cause of his dread. As he did not find comfort and happiness in the world, he shut himself up in his cell and lived for forty days a life of total self-denial.

On the following page, line 2, he tells us that he did not spend his life in pleasure and play, that he did not sleep happily one night, unless he had unlocked one secret door of wisdom. Never could he have produced his great poetry, had he not worked so hard, and sometimes under great difficulties.

Then he tells us that he saw in a dream the Prophet Khezr who gave him much encouragement and asked him not to repeat what Ferdousi had already said. When he awoke, the thought which was passing most through his mind, was that of Alexander the Great. After paying a noble and glowing tribute to Ferdousi, he says that in Ferdousi's book many things were left unsaid, and that, had Ferdousi wished to write everything that had happened in ancient times, his book would have been too lengthy, that he wrote what he thought absolutely necessary to write and left unsaid the parts which did not appeal to him. He gives the above reasons for writing the Book of Alexander, which he calls in the same passage Sharaf

Nāmeh-ye Khosrovān. We can certainly say that the Eskandar Nāmeh of Nezāmi is a complement only to that part of the Shāh Nāmeh of Ferdousi which deals with the career and conquests of Alexander the Great. Dr. Rieu does not give any reason for his assumption, on page 564 of the Catalogue of the British Museum, Persian Manuscripts, Vol. II, that Nezāmi once contemplated writing a book, Sharaf Nāmeh-ye Khosrovān, as a complement to the Shāh Nāmeh of Ferdousi. I take it that Dr. Rieu means that the Sharaf Nāmeh-ye Khosrovān was contemplated but never written by Nezāmi, and that it was to be a complement to the whole of the Shāh Nāmeh. If so, Dr. Rieu cannot be correct, but at least this is what he says. Nezāmi says himself that Sharaf Nāmeh-ye Khosrovān is a complement to the Shāh Nāmeh of Ferdousi only so far as that part of the Shāh Nāmeh is concerned which deals with Alexander. The Sharaf Nāmeh-ye Khosrovān, i.e. the first book of the Eskandar Nāmeh is, therefore, an accomplished, not a contemplated work.

He dedicates this book to Nosratod-Din Jahān Pahlevān (see page 434*, line 20). This Nosratod-Din, alluded to by Nezāmi as having six letters in his name, is Abu Bakr, the son of the Atābek Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān. The designation, Jahān Pahlevān, which he uses in mentioning Nosratod-Din, belonged to both Abu Bakr as well as to his father Mohammad. We have the same reading in the British Museum MS. Add. 7729 in its prologue of the Sharaf Nāmeh, but the India Office MS. gives that couplet in the prologue of the Eqbāl Nāmeh.

On page 436*, line 12, he explains that he received an order from the king, asking him to dedicate this book to him. This shows another instance of kings being desirous that their names should be mentioned by Nezāmi in his works.

On page 433*, Nezāmi tells us that he intends to write three sections on Alexander the Great. His first will be

on the conquests of Alexander, his second on the wisdom and philosophy of the great conqueror, and his third on his prophetship. The section on Alexander's prophetship is very short compared with the other two, and is included in the second book of Alexander, the Eqbāl Nāmeh. It seems as though the poet wrote a long section on the prophetship of Alexander, and after the death of the poet those good Moslems who collected his works, omitted a great number of passages from it and incorporated it in the Eqbāl Nāmeh.

On page 437*, line 2, he mentions the difficulty of his task. He could not find the history of the great conqueror in one book. He collected material from the pages of different writers. He mentions that he has found his material also in Hebrew, Armenian and Pahlevi history books. He had to translate them into Persian first and use them as his sources. He also says :

“ He who knows any of these languages,
His tongue will not be ready to criticise.”

Besides the many accomplishments of Nezāmi, such as his great command of the Arabic and Persian languages, his knowledge of astronomy and mathematics, his great poetical talent, we find him a linguist in these other three languages.

On page 438*, line 12, he mourns the loss of his friends. He tells us that he has remained and that his sympathisers have departed. On the same page, line 15, we find him in a happier mood, which shows that these two passages have been written at different times. In this latter passage he calls upon the cup-bearer to fill his cup with a wine which is the foundation of religion. He calls upon the gardener “ to be joyful and open the gate and decorate the garden, because the time of the rose has come, and Nezāmi has entered the garden from the prison city ”.

In such a beautiful and heart-ravishing season, Nezāmi enters the garden and sits under a tall cypress tree. The scent of the rose and the shade of the rose tree had in-

toxicated the nightingale. His wife, a beautiful bride, enters the garden to pick roses. He describes her hair, which was hanging down to her knees, her face like a rose, and her laughing lips scattering sweetness. Her cheeks, under drops of perspiration, were like the petals of the rose under drops of dew, and she gave him a cup of the juice of sugar cane and told him to drink it in honour of the king. In this passage we find that Nezāmi had married again, and he has a deep love and great admiration for his wife.

On page 439*, line 10, we are told by Nezāmi's own words that he first completed the *Makhzanol Asrār*, a task in which he did not hesitate a moment. After that he engaged himself in Shirin and Khosrou; from these he pitched the pavilion outside and knocked at the door of the love of Leili and Majnun. When he disengaged himself from this romance, he galloped his steed towards the Haft Peikar; and now at the banquet of eloquence he would beat the drum of the fortune of Alexander.

On page 508, beginning with line 22, is a eulogy on the king, the son of Akhsetān. This shows that Menuchehr III actually gained the throne of Shirvān, a fact not mentioned in any historical work. In this eulogy Nezāmi expresses his condolence on the death of Akhsetān.

Scholars are either silent, particularly Persian, or else confused as to the date of the death of King Akhsetān. W. Barthold in his article on Shirvān Shāh, C. L. Huart in his on Khāqāni, E. Berthels in his on Nezāmi (all in the Encyclopædia of Islām), and E. G. Browne in his Literary History of Persia, do not mention any date for the death of this monarch. Dr. Rieu, in the Catalogue of Persian MSS. in the British Museum, Vol. II, p. 559, states that Akhsetān died in or shortly after A.H. 584. E. de Zambaur, in his Manuel de Généalogie, p. 182, gives A.H. 566 for the death of Akhsetān. Lane Poole, in his Mohammadan Dynasties, does not mention the Shirvān Shāhs at all. Dr. Hādi Hasan, in his admirable Falaki Shervāni, has proved by numismatic evidence, that Akh-

setān died between A.H. 593 and 600 (A.D. 1196-1203). As the Sharaf Nāmeh in which the above eulogy occurs was finished in A.H. 597, the period for the date of the death of Akhsetān is reduced to between A.H. 593 and 597.

On page 509, line 7, Akhsetān is rhymed with *golsetān*, which shows that Akhsetān is the correct spelling.

On page 565, line 5, Nezāmi says that, when he completed this banquet (Sharaf Nāmeh), he started the next one, and when he had finished half of it, it seemed as if God had given him half the world. He says that, if he lives, he will compose, by his experience and poetic talent, the other half in such a manner as to awake those asleep and to make the fish in the sea dance in rapture and ecstasy.

On the same page, line 17, is the eulogy on King Nosratod-Din. He says that, on account of the justice of King Nosratod-Din, everyone drinks wine to his health. "Farang, Palestine, and the monks of Rome receive and obey his orders with love." The poet says that he had no befitting offering to lay before his royal throne, therefore from Alexander's water of life he made this lustrous pearl, and when he finished it, he sent it to his court as an offering.

On the following page, still addressing the king, he says that he is the nightingale who has flown from the mythical garden of Eram and has made his nest in the king's garden. He will sing such a melody in his time that for many years the king's name would remain in the world. He gives the date of the completion of the Sharaf Nāmeh as A.H. 597 (A.D. 1200), which, however, is not given in the India Office MS. 402, nor in the British Museum MS. Add. 7729. This date, however, is found in the later copies of the British Museum, Add. 26,147, fol. 226, Add. 26,146, fol. 143, and Add. 25,799, fol. 176.

We saw previously, when we were dealing with the material from page 449, beginning from line 8, that when Nezāmi finished the Haft Peikar, he started on the Es-

kandar Nāmeh. Also we proved that the Haft Peikar was completed in A.H. 593 (A.D. 1197), therefore the date A.H. 597 (A.D. 1200) can be accepted as the date of the completion of the Sharaf Nāmeh, notwithstanding its absence in the earlier copies.

On the same page, line 15, the poet says that he has dedicated the book to the king, in order that the painting of the king may gild the poet's pen. Further on he says that he did not write this book for gold, and had he written it for gold, he could never have produced poetry like pearls. It was his love which compelled him to do this work, and although the poet "had little to say, yet love had plenty."

On page 567, line 3, we have the third instance of Nezāmi's advice to his son. He tells his son not to spend his life in play. He wishes him to remember the time when he was playing at the age of seven, and explains to him how the age of childhood and play passed away like a phantom. He reminds him of his fatherly advice, when the child was seven years old, and tells him it should be more precious to him than beautiful rubies. He also reminds him that he gave advice to him when he was fourteen years old and exalted him like a beautiful cypress. Then he tells him that he is now seventeen years of age and should possess seventeen good qualities. This last couplet, giving the age of his son as seventeen, and the mention of seventeen qualities, is, I am convinced, tampered with and is not in the form and style in which Nezāmi wrote it. The couplet is of loose diction and has neither propriety of thought nor precision in diction. We only guess the meaning from the loose and uncouth arrangement of its ungrammatical and redundant words. In the second hemistich of the couplet there are unnecessary words placed to fill up a gap in the metre and to supply the rhyme. There is not one instance in the whole of Nezāmi's works of over 35,000 couplets where he has used unnecessary words to

fill up a gap in the metre or where he sacrifices the meaning to the rhyme. His command of language was such as to make it impossible for us to change one word of a couplet without destroying its music and altering its meaning. With Rumi it is a different matter. In his *Masnavi* he very often uses words without any other object than to fill gaps. Whenever Rumi could not find a word which would supply the requirements of his rhyme, metre and meaning, he immediately would coin a word. The Five Treasures of Nezāmi, if we reckon an average of sixteen words to a couplet, contain over half a million words. It has been found extremely difficult to change one single word in a couplet without distorting the meaning or spoiling its beauty; while it is possible even to improve upon certain couplets of other poets by the substitution of one or more words. Nezāmi's poetry seems to be like a delicate and highly artistic painting, the effect of which is destroyed, if a part is taken away or substituted. To show the point more clearly, I give here the couplet in question and leave it to the judgment of the reader :

وزین هفده خصل آوریدن بدست
شده هفده ساله دیسان که هست

It is, however, most likely that he has actually mentioned the age of his son to be seventeen, only I doubt if all the words in the above couplet are his or are in the form in which he composed them.

In the following line he tells his son that he has informed him of everything which it was befitting to know. He tells him that he has four precious books, every one of which is a fatherly memento for him. They are his four brothers, and the fifth brother is he, the son himself. This line clearly shows that Nezāmi wrote this advice to his son when he had completed the *Haft Peikar*, his fourth book, and not during the composition of the *Eskandar Nāmeh*. Had he written this advice

when he had completed, or when he was composing the Eskandar Nāmeh, he would have said that his son had five brothers. In the next line he tells his son to act, not according to his own wishes, but according to those four codes of law. If he ever wished to find a key to knowledge, he would find it in the first line of that letter (of advice).

On the same page, line 18, he says that, when he completed this half of the book, he enthroned himself on the throne. Still addressing his son, he says that he has left in his book souvenirs specially for him, so that he may read and obtain freedom from fetters and servitude, and that kingship and prophetship are both found therein as a memento of his father. In conclusion, he prays that his son may be happy and prosperous in the world, and that Nezāmi may live through him.

It seems that part of this advice belongs to a more comprehensive address or counsel, written after Nezāmi had completed his first four books, and part of it belongs to an advice written when he completed the first part of his fifth and last book, Eskandar Nāmeh. The passage which mentions his son's age as seventeen, if we have his actual words, must have been written in A.H. 591 (A.D. 1195), because in A.H. 588 (A.D. 1192), when he wrote the advice to his son, the son was fourteen years of age.

MATERIAL FROM THE BOOK OF ALEXANDER (b) EQBĀL NĀMEH

On page 570, beginning at line 11, we find Nezāmi extremely sad. He mourns the loss of his youth and the loss of his helper and admirer through whom he had been able to produce rare and noble poetry. He says that, before he could produce his poetry from the blood of his brain, he had a hidden admirer who used to converse with him in secret. Now that his admirer had become silent, he has forgotten his speech also. Moreover, the hearer who used to listen to his poetry, has also dis-

appeared from the world. " Since King Arsalān went and slept in the dust," he says, " how could one compose in this condition? " Then he says, maybe that the empire of the king would help him and bring back his speech again to him. These couplets are also found in the British Museum MS. Add. 7729, fol. 273, and the India Office MS. 402, fol. 381a.

Qezel Arsalān was killed in A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191), about ten or eleven years before the composition of this book. This reference to the death of Qezel Arsalān must, no doubt, have been written during, or even before, the composition of the first part of the Eskandar Nāmeh, as it is improbable that the poet should mourn him after so long a time. It will be shown that the Eqbāl Nāmeh was completed in A.H. 599 (A.D. 1202). The loss of his helper and admirer seems to mean the loss of his wife, because in this passage he mourns the loss of two people, one the admirer who used to converse with him in secret, and the other the hearer, Qezel Arsalān.

On the same page, line 17, we are given an interesting aspect of the life of the poet. One night, which seemed to him " darker than a grieved heart," he was engaged in solving a problem " more minute than a hair's breadth." He could not find his way to a solution of the mystery. It seemed that Providence had made a " blank wall in front of him," and his mind was blank and darker than the black night. On that night he was like a diver gathering pearls, until a third of the night had passed. The remaining two-thirds of the night seemed to him extremely long. The bird of time had come to a standstill; the nightingale had stopped singing. He spent the whole of that dreary night in " weaving gold brocade of seven colours " (meaning composing poetry). He says that when he used to spend his nights in that manner, he had a lord of favours who was his helper and bestowed upon him his needs. He mentions the name of that lord of favours as Khājeh Emād of Khoi, and says that the position of the poet became exalted

through him. He had filled the world with the treasure of generosity and had bejewelled liberality by caskets of pearl-like eloquence. The poet had not seen anyone in the world except him who possessed both generosity and poetic talent. He mourns that the games of Providence have for some time hidden him, and that he has neither a sympathiser nor a mate and companion. On that night he could neither eat nor sleep; he was meditating on the subject matter of his composition which he wished to present to the king. In the morning he got up without having had any sleep or rest and began the composition of his book. He says that many years have passed since the jewel worshipper has obtained such a gem as this, meaning that it is a long time since any king had obtained such perfect gems of poetry in his praise. The jeweller had now obtained the precious stone, and those who want to buy perfect pearls have to buy them from him who possesses them.

It is important to note that during the time of Nezāmi there was no art of printing, so that the poet could not print and sell his poems and obtain a livelihood. The only thing a poet could do was to try to please the kings and nobles of his time, to compose panegyrics in their praise and leave the reward to their magnanimity and generosity. If we remember that Nezāmi, like some other great poets, had no source of income except what he could obtain through his poetry, this continual complaint of his poverty is understandable. When we constantly hear of his needs and of his being ill-treated, we must not think that he was greedy. He had to live, and in order to devote his time freely to the composition of poetry, he should have had enough to live on. Even after being requested by kings to dedicate his books to them, which he did, they do not seem to have rewarded him, except the ill-fated Qezel Arsalān.

On page 571, line 17, he says that, when the king asked him to decorate a garden, plant jasmine and cypress

trees for the happiness of the wise king, through his (the poet's) knowledge and obedience, he planted such a beautiful cypress tree, that under its shade all drink wine with joy in the name and to the memory of the king.

On page 572, line 1, he says that, although his enemies wish him ill, yet they obtain blessing and honour through his favour. They all read and study his grammar, commit his words to memory, and use his style in their letters and documents. This clearly shows that he has written a grammar which does not exist now. He says that he has obtained the blessing of leadership in style and composition, because he has turned his face away from the world and chosen a life of retirement and seclusion. He advises them not to give up a life of retirement and self-sacrifice, if they wish to obtain the key to the treasure of eternal happiness. He considers this life as a vision, the life of privation as a fearful dream, and when the morning comes (meaning when one unites with the Deity) the interpretation of that bad dream will be joy and happiness.

On page 574, line 4, Nezāmi calls upon himself to break through the fetters of Ganjeh, and says : " How much longer remain in the fetters of Ganjeh ? " Then he say that, although he is lost, like a pearl, in the city of Ganjeh, yet he is from the Qohestān of Qom. Therefore, as stated previously, he must have belonged originally to the mountain districts of Qom.

On page 574, line 7, is found a dedication to King Ezzod-Din. This Ezzod-Din is described as being descended from Dāvud, and as having inherited the empire from Mahmud. There was an Ezzod-Din Kei-Kāvus I., one of the Saljuqs of Arzerum, who ruled from A.H. 607 (A.D. 1210) to A.H. 616 (A.D. 1219). He was a direct descendant of Qelej Arsalān Dāvud, the second ruler of the Saljuqs of Asia Minor and a great-grandson of Arsalān Peighu, the son of the original Saljuq. There was also another Ezzod-Din Balbān, the eighth and last of the

Shāhs of Armenia, who reigned during A.H. 603-4 (A.D. 1206-7). There are also two Atābeiks of Musel who are called Ezzod-Din Mas'ud. They are the father and son of Nurod-Din Arsalān Shāh I. Mas'ud I. reigned A.H. 572-89 (A.D. 1176-93), Mas'ud II. reigned A.H. 607-15 (A.D. 1210-18). None of these Ezzod-Dins reigned at the time when Nezāmi was writing this portion of the Eskandar Nāmeh. It is probable that either one of the first two or the last of these four monarchs, in order to associate his name with the works of Nezāmi, requested his own court poet to make a few couplets, incorporating his name in the panegyric. As a matter of fact, the India Office MS. 402 and the Teheran edition give also the name of the king as Jahān Pahlevān Nosratos-Din. This Nosratos-Din is Abu Bakr, the son of Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān, the son of Ildegez, one of the Atābeiks of Āzarbāijān, to whom the Khosrou Shirin, the Haft Peikar, and the Sharaf Nāmeh and the Eqbāl Nāmeh were dedicated. Even in the Teheran edition, which names Ezzod-Din on page 576, line 8, the last hemistich of the second couplet, we find Nezāmi praying that the ruler may be for the world as Jahān Pahlevān. It is also important to note that Nezāmi gives the designation Jahān Pahlevān not only to Mohammad, but also to Nosratos-Din in his eulogy on that ruler, both in his Sharaf Nāmeh and Eqbāl Nāmeh.

On page 583, line 1, we find Nezāmi a monogamist. He says : " Do not ruin the harvest of thy life by marrying several wives, one mate would be enough for thee. If thou dost marry several wives, thou wilt not have the affection of any one of them." " A son, as pure as a gem, can only be born when the mother and father are united together in one heart." In this connection it is necessary to notice that, although Nezāmi married several wives, yet he never had more than one wife at a time. He only married another wife, after he had lost one through death.

On page 583, line 9, we find Nezāmi stricken with

grief and sorrow. He has lost his wife, and the tone of his language conveys to us the extent of his misery. He first describes the death of the mistress of Archimedes and says : "The rose has fallen in the dust ; the singing nightingale has fled from the garden, and the dust has enveloped that fairy in the same way as fairies kidnap human beings." Then he mentions that the king, from his great munificence and liberality, gave him in marriage a handmaiden far superior in beauty, love, wisdom, and chastity to the mistress of Archimedes. He adds : "When she made my eyes the source of light, the evil eye took her away from me, and Providence snatched her away as though she had never lived. How can I explain the happiness I had through her ? May God be content with her." Further on he continues that it had been his portion, strangely enough, that whenever he renewed, through his composition, the old stories and sweetened the lives of the people with his heart-ravishing words, he lost a bride.

On the same page, line 14, we are told the number of wives he has had, all of whom he has lost. When he composed the Khosrou Shirin, he gave alms for the blessing of the soul of his departed wife. When he built the wall around the treasure of Leili Majnun, he lost another wife, and now when this book is completed, he entrusted to the Guardian Angel another bride. He adds then, in his grief and despair, that he does not know how he can relate the stories of Rome and Rus (Russia) in spite of the sorrow of the loss of so many wives. He then philosophically answers himself by saying that it is better for him to forget the old sorrow and try to occupy his mind with the composition of these stories. We know from this passage that he married three wives, all of whom he lost, the first, when he completed the Khosrou Shirin, and whose death we have previously mentioned, when we were dealing with the material from the Khosrou Shirin. He lost this wife, the daughter of the ruler of Darband, in

A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185), and from her he had a son, Mohammad. He lost his second wife when he completed the romance of Leili Majnun. When he was composing the first part of the Eskandar Nāmeh, he gave us a hint that he wished to marry again, and said that, although he was old, the desire of youth had not departed from him. He must have married his third wife soon after he made that reference. His third wife cannot have lived with him longer than two years. As a matter of fact, all his wives had a very short life, and he had only one son from the first.

On page 642, beginning with line 11, there is a eulogy on King Ezzod-Din. A few lines further on he says : " Which of the kings possessed such a banquet except he who was both king and Jahān Pahlevān? " This Ezzod-Din is either the Ezzod-Din Qelej Arsalān II., one of the ruling Saljuqs of Asia Minor, who reigned during A.H. 551-84 (A.D. 1156-88), or Ezzod-Din Balbān, the eighth and last Shāh of Armenia, who ruled during A.H. 603-4 (A.D. 1206-7), or Ezzod-Din Mas'ud I., the Atābek of Musel, who reigned during A.H. 572-89 (A.D. 1176-93). But as he refers to him as being Jahān Pahlevān, it is probable that he is Abu Bakr Nosratod-Din, the son of Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān. As a matter of fact, although both names could be made to supply the metre, yet Nosratod-Din fits better in the hemistich than Ezzod-Din.

On page 643, beginning at line 5, still addressing the king, he says that, as he is unable to pay a personal visit to his court, he is sending him two pearls brought out from the sea of his mind. These pearls had obtained their lustre from him, one of them possessed the chastity of the Holy Virgin Mary, and the other had been lit by the light of Jesus. In beauty one was comparable with the full moon, and the other, like the sun, was incomparable in its divine light. The name of one was Moqbel and that of the other Eqbāl, and they were sister and brother.

He asks the king that, as he has sent his heart and soul to his court, they may be sent back in such a manner as the poet hoped and expected. He adds in conclusion that he had nothing more to say but to leave the matter entirely to the king himself. These two gems, I think, must be his son and the second part of the Eskandar Nāmeh. The first part of the Eskandar Nāmeh was called by him Sharaf Nāmeh. It is interesting to note here that, when he sent his romance of Khosrou Shirin to Shirvān Shāh, he called that romance Moqbel also. It is, therefore, difficult to suppose that Nezāmi meant that the second part of the Eskandar Nāmeh was called Moqbel. Probably the word Moqbel is used, not only here, but also in the Khosrou Shirin, as an adjective. Eqbāl either means his son Mohammad or else the second part of his Eskandar Nāmeh. In either case, he wishes the king to keep one, Moqbel, and send him back the other, Eqbāl. If we suppose by Eqbāl he meant his own son, Mohammad, we must not presume that Eqbāl was the boy's name either; the word should thus be taken as an adjective. If, however, by Eqbāl he meant the second portion of the Eskandar Nāmeh, we must suppose it stands for Eqbāl Nāmeh.

On the same page, beginning from line 14, he tells us that he must seek an intelligent buyer of his pearls, so that the name of the jeweller may not be lowered in the eyes of the people. Poetry requires a hearer as well as a composer, and a jewel without a buyer is of no use. What was the good of his pearls to him, if there was no one who knew their value and would buy them from him. His customer did not know the value of perfect pearls, so that he might pay for them liberally, but those who understood precious stones and knew their value, followed him in great numbers. As soon as he obtained a unique gem, they began to stone him, saying : " Give us thy gem, or we will kill thee." The poet becomes full

of anger at their outrage ; they expect to possess themselves of rare and priceless gems without paying for them. In the end he asks : " How could a person expect to raise his name and fame through eulogies which he wished to obtain meanly ? " This passage explains quite clearly that, after he sent his eulogy and the two parts of the Eskandar Nāmeh to the king, he was not rewarded for them. It also shows us that dedications and eulogies have been demanded from him by the king, and even threats have been used in order to obtain them. It also demonstrates to us Nezāmi's independence and fearless attitude towards the king in refusing to allow himself to be robbed of the fruit of his toil, and refusing to remain complacently quiet and submissive under extortion.

On page 644, line 3, Nezāmi says that, although he is old, yet his poetic talent has not diminished, that he is still fifty-seven years of age, although he looks a hundred. Four couplets later he says that, although he is sixty years of age, his condition has not changed. This line is given in the India Office MS. 402, fol. 422a, line 12, and in the British Museum MSS. Add. 7729, fol. 315a, and Add. 25,900, fol. 319a. Evidently the first couplet must have been written three years before the second, and they do not belong to the same place. He must have written the first when he had completed, or when he was composing the first part of the Eskandar Nāmeh, which he completed in A. H. 597 (A.D. 1200). The second couplet must have been written in A.H. 599 (A.D. 1202). These two couplets prove still more the accuracy of our dates, not only for the composition of the two parts of the Eskandar Nāmeh, but also for the exact date of his birth. At the beginning of A.H. 597 (A.D. 1200) he had completed his fifty-sixth year and had entered his fifty-seventh, therefore he must have been born in A.H. 540 (A.D. 1145). At the end of A.H. 599 (A.D. 1202) he had completed his fifty-ninth year and had entered the sixtieth year of his life ; this again shows the year of his birth as A.H. 540 (A.D. 1145).

On the same page he describes an incident in his life during his youth. One day he was grieving over the death of his parents and other relatives and began to weep. At night he dreamt that one of his relations spoke to him and told him that he might grieve over the departure of his dear ones only on the condition that he could guarantee not to join them himself.

On page 645, line 1, he tells us that the dream produced such an effect on his mind that from that night onwards he did not grieve for his departed ones, but prepared himself for his own journey.

On the same page, line 7, he says that he has completed his Persian story, and prays that it may be as auspicious as the name of King Mas'ud, that when the king reads it, wisdom may be his helper and knowledge his friend, and that this story may be exalted through him and the king be profited by it. In conclusion, he adds the prayer that Nezāmi may be happy and that his name and fame may be raised high through his rhyme, a prayer that God has graciously answered.

The British Museum MS. Add. 7729, fol. 276b, gives the full name of this Mas'ud as Ezzod-Din Abol Fath Mas'ud, the son of Nurod-Din, but the India Office MS. 402, fol. 422b, line 7, gives the name of the king as Mas'ud, and fol. 421a, line 3, gives the title as Ezzod-Din. This Ezzod-Din Mas'ud was one of the Atābeks of Musel and was placed on the throne at the age of fifteen, after the death of his father in A.H. 607 (A.D. 1210). He ruled until A.H. 615 (A.D. 1218). The name Ezzod-Din Mas'ud must, therefore, have been added in the works of Nezāmi after his death, most probably by a court poet of that young monarch who wished his name to be associated with the works of Nezāmi.

There is no date given for the completion of the Eqbāl Nāmeh either in the Teheran lithographed edition or in the oldest manuscripts, such as the India Office MS. 402 or the British Museum MS. Add. 7729, but it is stated in

the British Museum MS. Add. 16,782, fol. 117, as well as in the Calcutta edition, page 190, that the last part of the Book of Alexander was completed on the 10th day of Ayār, A.H. 599 (31st May, 1202 A.D.).

On page 642, line 3, is a record of the death of Nezāmi written by some unknown person. It is stated there that, when Nezāmi completed that work, he prepared himself for his departure, and that it was a long time since the page of the history of his life had been completed. It says his age was sixty-three years and six months when he "beat the drum of departure". At the time of his death he talked to his friends about the road and the guide to the divine presence, and laughed and said, that the Forgiver had made him hopeful of His forgiveness. When he was saying these words he went to sleep as though he had never been awake. This passage is also found in the India Office MS. 402, fol. 431, the British Museum MSS. Add. 7729, fol. 313b, and Add. 25,900, fol. 317, the only difference in this passage between these manuscripts and the Teheran lithographed edition is that in the Teheran edition it says : "It is a long time since he has departed." From the Teheran edition we would conclude that this passage was written some time after the poet's death, while from the manuscript versions we understand that the passage in question was written soon after the death of Nezāmi. If we take this passage as conclusive and authentic, and we have no reason to do otherwise, Nezāmi must have died in the middle of A.H. 604 (A.D. 1207).

This concludes the survey of the material for the life and times of Nezāmi, taken from his own works, and I end this part of the work by repeating Nezāmi's prayer, namely :

" May God bless him who says, may God bless Nezāmi."

The life of Nezāmi was inseparably bound up with the events of his time, and his upbringing, education, and

mode of life were necessarily influenced by the disturbances, political upheavals, wars, and the rise and fall of dynasties and empires. It is, therefore, necessary to give here a short account of some of the most important events which took place during his span of life. He was a rigid Sunni, and therefore Baghdād and its Caliphs must have been the sanctuary of his heart. He was in the midst of the Esmā'ilis, and their activities, with those of the Fātemid Caliph of Egypt, must to his mind, as to the minds of many other Moslems, have been most bewildering. His patrons were Toghrel, the last Saljuq ruler of Persia, and the Atābeks of Āzarbāijān, therefore he must have felt the effect of the overthrow of the Saljuq Empire and its great officers, the Atābeks, by the slaves and servants of one of the kings of that dynasty, namely, the Shāhs of Khārazm. He also witnessed the gradual break-up of the Ghaznavid Empire, and the magnificence of the court of these great rulers, contrasted with the meanness with which Ferdousi was treated by the greatest sovereign of that empire, was ever present in the mind of the poet. My main authorities for some of the most important events which he witnessed during his lifetime are the following :—The Tārikh-e Gozideh, the Rouzatos Safā, the Rāhatos Sodur, and the Habibos Seyar. The paramount position and importance of the Caliphs of Baghdād demand our notice first.

THE ABBĀSID CALIPHS OF BAGHDĀD

In A.H. 529 (A.D. 1133) the Abbāsid Caliph Mostashed was a prisoner at Marāgheh in the hands of the Saljuq Sultan Mas'ud, the son of Mohammad, the son of Malek Shāh. While the prison guards were absent, a few of the Assassins entered the prison and murdered the Caliph. Mas'ud pursued the Esmā'ili Assassins, captured them, and put them to the sword. The Caliph was buried at the College at Marāgheh with all the pomp and ceremony compatible with his dignity.

A year previous to his capture by Ma'sud, Mostarshed, while a Caliph at Baghdād, had nominated his son Rāshed as a successor to the Caliphate after him, and had obtained the allegiance of the nobles of Baghdād for his son and successor. When the news of the murder of the Caliph reached Baghdād, Rāshed was proclaimed Caliph and obtained once more the allegiance of the nobles and also of the chief commissioner of the city, who was a servant of Mas'ud. In A.H. 530 (A.D. 1136) Mas'ud sent a messenger to Rāshed demanding the tribute of four hundred thousand dinārs which the late Caliph had agreed to pay yearly to him. Rāshed considered the payment of tribute below the dignity of a Caliph, refused to pay, and ordered the inhabitants of Baghdād to attack the commanders of the army of Mas'ud, who were at that time in Baghdād. The Saljuqs fled from the city; meanwhile, the Caliph omitted the name of Mas'ud from the Khotbeh. Mas'ud, on hearing this, marched on Baghdād. The army of the Caliph was defeated outside Baghdād, and Mas'ud besieged the city for fifty days. After the siege the Sultan left for Nahrevān. The Caliph Rāshed fled from Baghdād to Musel, and from Musel to Marāgheh. Mas'ud marched on Marāgheh and defeated the Caliph, who then fled to Ispahān. There he was murdered by one of the Esmā'ili Assassins, whom the attendants of the Caliph captured and put to death; this Caliph was buried in Ispahān. During the time in which Rāshed had fled from Baghdād, Mas'ud entered that city and appointed Moqtafi as Caliph. After two or three days the Sultan sent a messenger to the new Caliph, asking him to give a detailed list of all the requirements and expenses of himself and his servants, so that they might be supplied. The Caliph answered that every day forty mules were bringing water to him to Baghdād, and that the Sultan could guess his other requirements accordingly. The Sultan took over all financial, military, and civil affairs from the Caliph and did not let him have any voice in any important affairs of the empire.

After the death of Mas'ud in A.H. 547 (A.D. 1152) the Caliphate at Baghdād became once more independent, and Moqtafi would not permit any of the Saljuq Sultans to enter Baghdād. This Caliph died in A.H. 555 (A.D. 1160). On the death of the Caliph Moqtafi, Nezāmi was fifteen years old, and before the death of Mas'ud we could hardly expect that the poet would have taken any interest in the political affairs of the world. After the death of Mas'ud, Malek Shāh, his nephew, became the Sultan. He was fond of pleasure and lived a dissolute life which roused the anger of his courtiers and nobles, who imprisoned him in a fortress at Hamedān in A.H. 548 (A.D. 1153) and seated his brother Mohammad on the throne. In A.H. 551 (A.D. 1156) Mohammad sent an ambassador to Baghdād to request the Caliph to cause his name to be mentioned in the Khotbeh. The Caliph did not grant his request, consequently he marched on Baghdād and besieged that city. The Caliph had fortified the city, and the inhabitants of Baghdād defended it with great courage. Meanwhile disturbances had broken out in Āzarbāijān, so Mohammad raised the siege of Baghdād and returned to quell the disturbances in Āzarbāijān. Afterwards cholera broke out in Baghdād, and a great many of the citizens perished.

In the year A.H. 552 (A.D. 1157) the Caliph Moqtafi ordered that a beautiful door be made for the Ka'beh. They took the door and fixed it on the Ka'beh, taking to Baghdād the old door, from whose wood the Caliph made a coffin for himself. He died in A.H. 555 (A.D. 1160). Mostanjed, his son, had already been nominated by his father as his successor, but when the Caliph was dying, his younger son, Abu Ali, raised a claim to the Caliphate. His mother had bribed the amirs and nobles, so that, after the death of Moqtafi, they should elect Abu Ali as Caliph. As most of the people had already given their allegiance to Mostanjed, there were great disturbances in Baghdād. The step-mother of Mostanjed

had arranged with her servants to kill him as soon as he entered the palace to pay a last visit to his dying father. He heard of this plan and took ample precautions for his own safety. On becoming Caliph he imprisoned his step-mother, together with her son, Abu Ali, and caused all her servants who had conspired in the attempt on his life to be drowned in the Tigris. He was Caliph for eleven years and died in A.H. 566 (A.D. 1170). Mostazi succeeded his father, Mostanjed. He was famous for his justice and generosity. At the beginning of his Caliphate, Qotbod-Din Qeimāz was the chief amir of the Caliph. He had usurped from the Caliph great powers and would act independently of him and without consulting him in any important matters of state. If he disliked any order from the Caliph, he would not put it into execution. In A.H. 570 (A.D. 1174) Qeimāz decided to arrest the Prime Minister, Zahirod-Din Attār. The Prime Minister took refuge with the Caliph, and Qeimāz ordered his house to be plundered. After the plunder of Attār's house, Qeimāz, with the crowd, marched to the palace to demand the surrender of the Prime Minister from the Caliph. When the Caliph heard the clamour of the mob, he ascended to the roof of his palace and shouted to the people, saying : "Qeimāz has transgressed his limits, therefore his property belongs to the people and his blood to the Caliph." On hearing this, the mob turned on the house of Qeimāz for plunder. He managed to escape the fury of the mob, and fled towards Musel, but he perished on the way from heat and thirst.

It is related that, when the mob were busy plundering Qeimāz's house, a poor man found five bags of gold in the house, but did not know how to take them away through the mob. Whilst roaming about, thinking what to do with them, he found himself in the kitchen where cauldrons of food were boiling. Dropping the sacks of gold into one of the boiling cauldrons, he put the steaming pot on

his head and forced his way through the crowd. The mob laughing at him, remarked, "Could you not find anything better to carry?" He answered that his wife and children were hungry, and that this was the most welcome thing they wanted at the time. In this manner he took the gold home.

Towards the end of Nezāmi's life relations between the Caliph Nāser and Mohammad Khārazm Shāh were strained, which resulted in the siege of Baghdād by Khārazm Shāh in A.H. 614 (A.D. 1217). This siege proved disastrous to the army of Mohammad Shāh, who lost most of his men through cold and snow. It weakened greatly the power of Mohammad Shāh, and the repeated sieges of Baghādād had also lessened the prestige of the Caliphs. This helped to prepare the ground for the invasion of the Mongols in A.H. 617 (A.D. 1220), the greatest calamity the world as a whole, and Persia in particular, has ever experienced.

THE GREAT SALJUQS AND THE KHĀRAZM SHĀHS

When Nezāmi was born, the power of the last Great Saljuq, Sultan Sanjar, had started to wane. His vassal, Atsiz, a descendant of a favourite cup-bearer of Malek Shāh, had already rebelled against and been subdued by Sanjar. Atsiz, who was a governor of Khārazm, made an alliance with the Qarā Khatā'is and incited them to invade Sanjar's territory. Sanjar suffered his first crushing defeat in A.H. 536 (A.D. 1141) at the hands of the Qarā Khatā'is in Transoxiana. In this battle he lost a hundred thousand men, together with the cities of Marv and Nishāpur, whilst Atsiz proclaimed his independence and ruled in Khārazm. Meanwhile, the Ghoz tribes, who had, with the permission of Sanjar, crossed the Oxus and settled in the neighbourhood of Balkh, rebelled against him. The cause of the rebellion was the quality of

twenty-four thousand sheep which they had agreed to supply yearly to the governor of Sanjar as a tax. Upon hearing of their rebellion, Sanjar, with a hundred thousand men, marched against the Ghoz. The Ghoz were overawed and submitted to payment of a heavy fine beside the required number and quality of the sheep, but Sanjar would not hear of this. Consequently the nomads fought desperately, won the battle, and captured Sanjar himself. They then ravaged Marv, Nishāpur, and the province of Kermān, committing untold atrocities and ravaging the country wherever they went. In A.H. 552 (A.D. 1157) Sanjar managed to escape from his captors. When he reached Marv, on seeing the ruined condition of his country, he did not wish to live any longer and died in the same year at seventy-three years of age.

Meanwhile, his unfaithful vassal, Atsiz, who had died a year previously, left his son, Il-Arsalān, on the throne of Khārazm or Khiveh, which stretched as far east as the province of Jand on the Jaxartes. After Il-Arsalān's death, Takesh in A.H. 590 (A.D. 1194) overthrew the last Saljuq, Toghrel II., who, as we have seen, was one of Nezāmi's patrons. Thus, the greater part of western Persia was added to the Khārazm Empire. Takesh reigned till A.H. 590 (A.D. 1194) and his son, Alā'od-Din Mohammad, succeeded him on the throne. Alā'od-Din extended his empire in every direction, subduing Balkh and Samarcand, annexing the western province of the Qarā Khatā'i Empire, and bringing under his own suzerainty the province of Ghur and Ghazneh.

In the archives of Ghazneh he found letters written by the Caliph Nāser, urging the Ghurid to unite with the Qarā Khatā'i against Khārazm. This was a great cause of annoyance to Mohammad Shāh, who nominated a descendant of Ali, Seiyed Atā'ol Molk of Tarand, to the Caliphate, and as we saw when dealing with the Caliphs of Baghdād, he was obliged to give up the march on Baghdād on account of the loss which his army suffered through severe cold and a heavy snow-storm.

THE SALJUQS OF ERĀK, KORDESTĀN, AND ĀZARBĀIJĀN

During the reign of Sanjar, the last Great Saljuq king, Mas'ud, his nephew, the son of Mohammad, the son of Malek Shāh, was ruler of Erāk and Kordestān and, as mentioned when we were dealing with the Abbāsid Caliphs, Mas'ud had besieged Baghdād twice during the caliphate of Mostarshed and Rāshed. He was responsible for the defeat, capture, and death of these two Caliphs and the appointment of Moqtafi. After his victories over the Caliphs of Baghdād, he became the independent ruler of (Persian) Erāk, Fārs, and Mesopotamia. He had several wars with his brothers and relatives, in all of which he was victorious. He is well known in history for his valour and justice and for his kindness to the poor. His first war, after his victorious return from Baghdād, was with the governor of Fārs, who had rebelled against him. He sent his brother, Saljuq Shāh, in company with Qarā Sonqor, to quell the rebellion. Qarā Sonqor distinguished himself with the utmost bravery in that battle, conquered Shirāz, gave the city to Saljuq Shāh, and returned to Hamedān, where he died soon after. Mas'ud appointed the Atābek, Ildegez, as successor of Qarā Sonqor and made him governor of Āzarbāijān. When Mas'ud was at the zenith of his power, Abbās, a deputy of Sanjar, was governing in Rei. Sanjar, for some reason not mentioned in Habibos Seyar, was displeased with Abbās. He deputed Mas'ud to arrest him, and Mas'ud, who was then in Hamedān, marched on Rei to capture Abbās. Before Mas'ud reached Rei, Abbās came forth to meet him, and presenting him with great gifts, expressed to him and Sanjar his loyalty, submission, and humility to such an extent that Mas'ud pardoned him and returned to Hamedān. Soon after, Mas'ud started for Baghdād. Whilst he was in Baghdād, the faithless Abbās made an alliance with the enemies of Mas'ud and installed in Ispahān Soleimān,

the brother of Ma'sud, as king. Mas'ud left Baghdād with a great army to quell this disturbance. When he reached Holvān, he encountered a severe snowstorm and cold which prevented him from advancing further. He returned to Baghdād and started in the following spring with a large army for Erāk (i.e. Persian Erāk). Meanwhile Abbās, with the brother of Mas'ud, Soleimān, and Malek Shāh, were encamped near Hamedān, prepared to fight Mas'ud. On the approach of Mas'ud, the confederates fled to Rei, and Mas'ud, pursuing the fugitives, entered that city and captured and imprisoned his brother. Abbās, having presented himself to Mas'ud, again asked for forgiveness, which was granted him. Mas'ud again returned to Baghdād and this time took Abbās with him. While in Baghdād, Abbās conspired with the Caliph, Moqtafi, to murder Mas'ud. Having obtained information about this conspiracy, Mas'ud had Abbās hanged on the following day. One of the confederates of Abbās, Buzābeh, was the governor of Ispahān, and on hearing of the execution of Abbās, he rebelled against Mas'ud. On hearing of the rebellion of Buzābeh, Mas'ud left Baghdād hurriedly for Ispahān. Buzābeh had prepared a great army and marched out of Ispahān to give battle to Mas'ud, but was defeated, captured, and ordered to be cut in two. This battle was the last serious engagement in which Mas'ud fought, and after this victory no other enemy of his dared to stand against him. The remainder of his reign passed mostly in peace and prosperity. He died in A.H. 547 (A.D. 1151), and was buried at Hamedān. At this time Nezāmi was seven years old. We do not know whether he was in Erāk or in Āzarbāijān during the first seven years of his life, but although these upheavals influenced his life, upbringing, and education, yet we can hardly suppose that he paid much attention to them.

After the death of Mas'ud, his nephew, Malek Shāh, became king. He was a man fond of pleasure and lived

a dissolute life, preferred the company of women and minstrels, and would not give attention to the affairs of the empire. His nobles and courtiers, therefore, imprisoned him in a fortress at Hamedān and seated his brother Mohammad on the throne. After a few days, Malek Shāh managed to escape from prison, and fled to Khuzestān, and on the death of his brother in A.H. 555 (A.D. 1160) he entered Ispahān and proclaimed himself the rightful king, but died a few months later. The first thing that Mohammad Shāh did when he became king, was to kill Khās Beg, who was one of the most important nobles and courtiers of the late Mas'ud. This was a signal for great disturbances and rebellion in his empire. On hearing of the murder of Khās Beg, the amirs and nobles of Āzarbāijān, including Ildegez and Āqsonqor, the son of Khās Beg, proclaimed Soleimān Shāh, the son of Mohammad, the son of Malek Shāh, king. Mohammad Shāh at last subdued Āzarbāijān with the greatest difficulty and died in A.H. 554 (A.D. 1159).

Nezāmi was then fifteen years of age, and, whether resident in the district of Qom or whether at Ganjeh, he must have witnessed these disturbances and have felt the effect of these wars.

After the death of Mohammad, his uncle, Soleimān Shāh, the son of Mohammad, who was the sixth monarch of the Great Saljuqs, was brought from Musel to Hamedān by the amirs and courtiers, and in the beginning of A.H. 555 (A.D. 1159) was placed on the throne. In order to please the great Atābek, Ildegez, he designated the adopted son of the Atābek as his heir presumptive. This adopted son was Arsalān, the son of Toghrel, the son of Mohammad, the son of Malek Shāh, the third Great Saljuq monarch. Soleimān Shāh was prone to a life of ease and pleasure, and neglected the military, civil, and financial affairs of the country. The ministers advised the Atābek Ildegez to dethrone Soleimān Shāh and to seat Arsalān Shāh in his place. Consequently the Atābek,

in company with Arsalān Shāh, started from Āzarbāijān towards Hamedān. When they arrived near Hamedān, the ministers and courtiers of Soleimān Shāh, who had been enraged on account of the mode of life he was living, joined the Atābek Ildegez, took and imprisoned Soleimān Shāh in a fortress at Hamedān, and placed Arsalān Shāh on the throne. Soleimān Shāh died in prison in A.H. 556 (A.D. 1150); he had reigned only six months.

Arsalān Shāh was a high-minded king, possessed of great tolerance, patience, and munificence. He was endowed with great kindness and a forgiving spirit and was fond of fine clothes and good food, but he did not pay much attention to the finances of the country. Neither he nor his courtiers, it is related, ever used bad language. The whole of his dominions, through the help and wisdom of the Atābek, were prosperous, and whosoever invaded his territory was turned out, defeated by Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān and his brother Qezel Arsalān, the two brave sons of the Atābek, i.e. the two step-brothers of Arsalān Shāh. Arsalān Shāh died in A.H. 571 (A.D. 1175), when Nezāmi was thirty-one years of age. The Atābek Ildegez, with his two sons, Jahān Pahlevān and Qezel Arsalān, together with his grandson, Abu Bakr Nosratod-Din, were Nezāmi's greatest patrons. During the reign of Arsalān Shāh, his two governors at Rei and Ispahān, i.e. Hosāmod-Din Inānej and Ezzod-Din Qeimāz, united together, rebelled against him and marched on Hamedān, which was the capital of the Saljuqs of Erāk and Kordestān. They were defeated; Qeimāz fled to Rei, and Inānej to Māzanderān. Meanwhile, the king of the Abkhāz attacked Āzarbāijān with a great army. Arsalān Shāh marched to Āzarbāijān to meet his enemy, and near the fortress, Kāk, a great battle was fought between the two armies. Arsalān Shāh was victorious, a great number of the army of the enemy was slaughtered, and the remainder fled, leaving great booty behind for the army of the Sultan. After

his victory over the king of the Abkhāz, Arsalān Shāh's next campaign was against the Assassins who had fortified themselves near Qazvin and were a constant source of trouble to the people and were plundering the property of the inhabitants of that town. In this campaign he was successful and, in a short time, destroyed their stronghold, the Chār Sofeh. This campaign must have greatly interested Nezāmi who, being a Sunni, can have had no sympathy with the Assassins.

In A.H. 559 (A.D. 1164), Inānej, who had previously fled to Māzanderān, attached himself to the court of Takesh, the Khārazm Shāh, asked for and received from him an army, and invaded Erāk. He started plundering and committing atrocities in the neighbourhood of Qazvin and Abhar. Arsalān Shāh, in company with the Atābek Ildegez, advanced on Qazvin and once more defeated Inānej, who again fled to Māzanderān and again invaded the province of Rei in A.H. 563 (A.D. 1167). The Sultan on this occasion sent his step-brother, Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān, against him, and Mohammad, having been defeated, returned to Hamedān. Then the Atābek Ildegez himself marched against the enemy, and without fighting he concluded peace with him. One of the terms of peace was that Inānej should accompany the Atābek Ildegez to Hamedān and become one of the king's ministers. In Hamedān, on the night before he was to be received by the king, he was found murdered. Afterwards Arsalān Shāh bestowed the governorship of Rei on Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān, the son of Ildegez, who married the daughter of Inānej, from whom he had a son, Qotlogh Inānej.

In A.H. 568 (A.D. 1171), the mother of Arsalān Shāh, who was the wife of the Atābek Ildegez, died; her husband, the Atābek, also died the following year. Arsalān Shāh promoted Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān to the title of his step-father, the Atābek. He never recovered from the grief for the death of his mother

and step-father and died of grief in A.H. 571 (A.D. 1175). Sharafod-Din of Ispahān, the great poet, was a contemporary of Arsalān Shāh and consequently a contemporary of Nezāmi.

After the death of Arsalān Shāh, Toghrel, his son, a boy of seven, succeeded him. He is well known for his bravery, justice, and liberality, and besides being a poet himself, he was a patron of Nezāmi. He is, moreover, a landmark in history, being the last of the Saljuqs of Erāk and Kordestān. His Prime Minister was the Atābek Jahān Pahlevān Mohammad. In the beginning of his reign, the king of the Abkhāz again invaded Āzarbāijān from one quarter, while from another quarter his uncle Mohammad, the son of Toghrel, the son of Mohammad, the son of Malek Shāh, rebelled and invaded Erāk. Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān and his brother, Qezel Arsalān, in one month defeated both these enemies. As long as the Atābek, Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān, was living, the dominion of Toghrel was immune from invasion. Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān died in A.H. 582 (A.D. 1186), and after his death, invasion by his enemies became more frequent, and disorder broke out in many parts of his territory.

It is interesting to note that Anvari's prediction of the great gale, which we have mentioned before, was in the same year. In that year also great differences and quarrels arose between Toghrel and his uncle Qezel Arsalān, which resulted in great wars between them, and at last Toghrel was deposed, captured, and imprisoned by Qezel Arsalān. After the murder of Qezel Arsalān in A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191), Toghrel was set free and regained his throne, but he could not prevent the invasion of his dominions by his enemies, nor could he adequately deal with the many rebellions which broke out in all parts of his territories. In A.H. 590 (A.D. 1194), Qotlogh Inānej, with the help of Takesh Khārazm Shāh, once more invaded Erāk and, this time, defeated and killed Toghrel.

TABLE I. THE GREAT SALJUQS AND THE SALJUQS OF ERĀK, KORDESTĀN, AND AZARBAIJĀN
The Great Saljuqs

Saljuq

Mikā'il	Esrā'il	Musā	Arsalān Peighu
Saljuqs of Mesopotamia, etc.			

(1) Toghrel
A.H. 429 (A.D. 1037)

(2) Alp Arsalān
A.H. 455 (A.D. 1063)

(3) Malek Shāh
A.H. 465 (A.D. 1072)

(4) Mahmud A.H. 485 (A.D. 1092)	(5) Barkiārōq A.H. 487 (A.D. 1094)	(6) Mohammad A.H. 498 (A.D. 1104)	(7) Sanjar A.H. 511-552 (A.D. 1117-1157)
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Saljuqs of Erāk, etc.

(1) Mahmud A.H. 511 (A.D. 1117)		(3) Toghrel I. A.H. 526 (A.D. 1132)	(4) Mas'ud A.H. 527 (A.D. 1133)	(7) Soleimān Shāh A.H. 554 (A.D. 1159)	Saljuq Shāh
(2) Dāvud A.H. 525 (A.D. 1131)		(5) Malek Shāh A.H. 547 (A.D. 1152)	(6) Mohammad A.H. 548 (A.D. 1153)	(8) Arsalān Shāh A.H. 556 (A.D. 1161) (adopted by Ildegez see Table II)	Sanjar
(9) Toghrel II. A.H. 573-590 (A.D. 1177-1194)					

TABLE II. THE ATABEKS OF AZARBAIJĀN

(1) Ildegez A.H. 531 (A.D. 1136)	Arsalān Shāh (adopted, see TABLE I)	(2) Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān A.H. 568 (A.D. 1172)	(3) Qezel Arsalañ A.H. 581 (A.D. 1186)	Mir-e Mirān	(5) Uzbek Pahlevān A.H. 607-622 (A.D. 1210-1225)
(4) Abu Bakr A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191)	Qotlogh Inānej				

THE ATĀBEKS OF ĀZARBĀIJĀN

As the most important patrons of Nezāmi were the Atābeks of Āzarbāijān, it is necessary to have a brief account of the family, specially as all except the last of them have been mentioned and eulogized by Nezāmi. It was a custom in the province of Qepchāq that, whenever a merchant bought forty slaves in one transaction, he paid for only thirty-nine and had one extra slave free. During the reign of the Saljuq Sultan Mas'ud, a merchant had a transaction such as this in Qepchāq. He paid for thirty-nine slaves and demanded forty, i.e. one extra slave free, and received Ildegez, who was short and ugly. The merchant carted the slaves to Erāk of Persia. One night on the way, Ildegez, being very sleepy, fell out of the cart and was picked up twice, but the third time, either intentionally or unintentionally, he was left on the road, where he went to sleep. Waking up in the morning, he found himself alone and abandoned. He then joined a caravan and reached his companions in the evening. His master was surprised to see him, and when they arrived at their destination, the minister of Mas'ud, the fourth monarch of the Saljuqs of Erāk, bought the thirty-nine slaves for the king. He did not buy Ildegez on account of his ugly and unseemly appearance. Ildegez started to weep, and said that, if the minister bought these slaves for the pleasure of his heart, he should buy him to please God. The minister, having heard this, bought him also, and when presenting the slaves, he mentioned to the king what Ildegez had said. The king later on entrusted Ildegez to one of his amirs to teach him riding and archery, in which arts he became proficient in a short time. Later he became a kitchen boy to the guards. He distinguished himself as a cook, the king heard about the delicious food he used to make, and looked upon him with greater and greater favour every day, until at last he became one of his amirs. The king gave his sister-in-law, the widow of Toghrel, by whom she had a son,

Arsalān Shāh, in marriage to Ildegez, bestowed upon him the title of Atābek and gave him the governorship of Āzarbāijān. The Atābek, through his justice and sagacity, made Āzarbāijān tranquil and prosperous and subdued the great amirs who were too often prone to rebellion and disorder. As we have seen before, after the imprisonment of Soleimān Shāh in A.H. 555 (A.D. 1160) in the fortress of Hamedān by the nobles and ministers, the Atābek in accord with the other ministers and amirs, proclaimed his step-son, Arsalān Shāh, the son of Toghrel, king. The Atābek himself took in his own hands the affairs of the empire and spread his authority in Erāk also. He was the virtual ruler of the whole empire of the Saljuqs of Erāk, Kordestān, and Āzarbāijān, in which capacity he distinguished himself to the utmost, and died in A.H. 568 (A.D. 1172). After his death, his son, Mohammad, succeeded to his father's office. Soon after, Arsalān Shāh died of grief for the loss of his mother and step-father, and Mohammad, the son of Ildegez, seated Toghrel, the son of Arsalān Shāh, on the throne. Toghrel was a boy of seven years at the time of his accession, therefore the management of all the affairs of the kingdom were in the hands of Mohammad, the son of Ildegez. Mohammad distinguished himself in his office, and organised the affairs of Erāk and Āzarbāijān to such purpose that other ruling monarchs feared him, sent embassies to his court, expressed their sincerity and love towards him, and asked for his friendship. After ten years of regency and of rule, although not nominally yet in fact, over Erāk, Āzarbāijān, and Kordestān, he died in A.H. 581 (A.D. 1185). He was known as Atābek Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān, and he, his father Ildegez, his brother Qezel Arsalān, and his son Abu Bakr Nosratod-Din, were the great patrons of Nezāmi, in whose names he wrote extensive eulogies in most of his works. Mohammad Jahān Pahlevān left four sons, namely, Abu Bakr, Qotlogh Inānej, Mir-e Mirān and Uzbek Pahlevān.

The Atābek Qezel Arsalān, during the regency of his brother, was the governor of Āzarbāijān. After the death of his brother he left Hamedān, the capital of Toghrel, whose chief adviser and amir he became. Before his arrival in Hamedān, Qepteh Khātun, the wife of Mohammad, claimed the title of chief amir for her son, Qotlogh Inānej, but when the Atābek Qezel Arsalān arrived at Hamedān, she gave up the claim and married Qezel Arsalān. Soon afterwards, disagreements and quarrels broke out between Toghrel and Qezel Arsalān, which resulted in several battles. At last Qezel Arsalān, with an army from Tabriz, marched on Hamedān. Toghrel, not having power to resist him, fled. Qezel Arsalān entered the capital, remained there for a few days, and afterwards departed for Āzarbāijān, after which Toghrel returned once more to Hamedān. Through the instigation of the Atābek Qezel Arsalān, the amirs of Erāk rebelled against Toghrel and marched on Hamedān. When they reached the suburbs of the capital, they sent a message to Toghrel, expressing their regret and asking pardon for their rebellious attitude towards him, and said they wished to present their loyalty and sincerity personally to the monarch. The Sultan, believing them, sent back an answer saying that on the morrow, when he would be playing polo in the field, he would receive them and renew his covenant with them. They met on the following day as arranged, but suddenly the amirs took hold of the Sultan and imprisoned him in the fortress of Alanjaq. The Atābek Qezel Arsalān, on hearing this news, proceeded to Hamedān and wished to proclaim Sanjar, the son of Soleimān Shāh, king. Meanwhile, an ambassador came from Baghdād to Qezel Arsalān with a message from the Caliph Nāser to the effect that the Caliph thought that the dignity of kingship befitted the Atābek himself more than anyone else. The Atābek was overjoyed at this message and proclaimed himself king. Qotlogh and other amirs of Erāk, who considered them-

selves superior to Qezel Arsalān in lineage, could not bear him as their overlord. So one night, in the first week of his reign, in A.H. 587 (A.D. 1191), they went to his palace, killed him in his sleep, and divided the country between themselves. Toghrel, through the efforts and loyalty of some of his amirs, obtained his freedom, collected an army, attacked and destroyed his unfaithful amirs near Qazvin, and once more ascended the throne. After the murder of Qezel Arsalān, the Atābek Abu Bakr Nosratod-Din, the son of Jahān Pahlevān, succeeded his uncle as governor of Āzarbāijān. He moderated his ambition and was content with that governorship until his death in A.H. 607 (A.D. 1210). Meanwhile, as referred to previously, Toghrel was killed in A.H. 590 (A.D. 1194) by Qotlogh with the help of the army of Takesh Khārazm Shāh. Qotlogh Inānej, as mentioned before, was the grandson of the slave Ildegez whom Mas'ud, the Saljuq ruler of Erāk, promoted to the rank of Atābek and Premier. Takesh was a descendant of the Turkish slave, Anushtegin, who rose to the dignity of a cup-bearer to the Great Saljuq, Malek Shāh, and was promoted by him to the governorship of Khārazm. The last of the Saljuq rulers of Persia was, therefore, killed by a descendant of one of the slaves of the Saljuqs, and their empire was absorbed by a descendant of another slave of a king of the same dynasty.

THE FĀTEMID CALIPHS OF EGYPT

The Fātemid Caliphs who ruled in Egypt during the life of Nezāmi and who, although far away from both Qom and Ganjeh, influenced the life of the people of these districts to a degree not less than the immediate political upheavals which were constantly changing the destinies of kingdoms and empires, were the following :

Zāfer Abol Mansur Esmā'il, A.H. 544-49 (A.D. 1149-54),

Fā'ez Abol Qāsem Isā, A.H. 549-55 (A.D. 1154-60), Āzed Abu Mohammad Abdollāh, A.H. 555-67 (A.D. 1160-71).

The Fātemid Caliphs of Egypt were originally descended from Abdollāh, the son of Meimun, an oculist of Ahvāz and a Persian by race. Seeing his country ruled by the Caliphs of Baghdād, who were of alien race, he claimed that he was himself descended from Fātemeh, the daughter of the Prophet, and therefore, claiming to be a direct descendant of the Prophet, he pretended to be the right Commander of the Faithful. He crossed over to Egypt and in a very short time spread his doctrine there. His descendants became afterwards the mighty Fātemid Caliphs who ruled in Egypt over two and a half centuries, and who absorbed many parts of the empire of the Abbāsid Caliphs of Baghdād. The last of the Fātemid Caliphs was supplanted by Salāhod-Din, the celebrated Saladin, in A.H. 567 (A.D. 1171).

The Fātemid Caliphs ruled over practically the whole of North Africa, Egypt, and southern Syria and Aleppo. Their most serious wars were with the Crusaders, to whom they lost Sicily, Malta, Mahdiyeh, and Qeirovān. The glory and splendour of the court of the Fātemid Caliphs, their administration of justice, the immunity of their subjects from exploitation, the wealth and commerce of their people, as portrayed by the Persian Esmā'ili poet and traveller, Nāser-e Khosrou, are too well known to require repetition here. During the Caliphate of Āzed, the last Fātemid Caliph, the Crusaders invaded Egypt. The Moslems, fearing defeat, made peace with them, and agreed to pay them a million dinārs on condition that they evacuated Egypt. The deputies of the Crusaders entered Cairo to receive the agreed sum. Meanwhile Āzed had recovered from his fright and had sent a message to Nurod-Din Mahmud, the Zangid ruler of Syria, for help. Nurod-Din sent an army of eighty thousand men to their help, under the command of

Asadod-Din Shir Kuh. When the Crusaders heard of the approach of the army of Shir Kuh, they left Egypt. In this manner on two further occasions, the Crusaders invaded Egypt, and twice again Shir Kuh came to the help of the Moslems and drove the invaders out. On the third occasion, in A.H. 564 (A.D. 1168), he entered Cairo and took into his own hands all the important affairs of the Empire. The Caliph Āzed sent him a robe of honour and a covenant written by his own hand. The Prime Minister of Āzed was Shāpur, with whom the Caliph was displeased. Shir Kuh put the Prime Minister to death and sent his head to the Caliph and himself became the Prime Minister. He held that office for sixty-five days, after which he died. The Caliph made the nephew of Shir Kuh, Salāhod-Din Yusof, the son of Najmod-Din Aiyub, i.e. Saladin, successor to Shir Kuh. Saladin, in a short time, became powerful and independent, and the Caliph Āzed was like a puppet in his hands. Nurod-Din, the Zangid ruler of Syria, sent a message to Saladin, asking him to remove Āzed from the Caliphate, to omit his name from the Khotbeh and to substitute the name of the Abbāsid Caliph Mostazi, which he did after the request had been repeated. In A.H. 567 (A.D. 1171), therefore, when Āzed was dying, Saladin ordered that the Khotbeh should be read in the name of the Abbāsid Caliph. Āzed died before hearing this news, and thus the Fātemid Caliphate of Egypt came to an end.

At that time Nezāmi was twenty-six years of age, and as he was an orthodox Moslem, we can well imagine the feeling of satisfaction and joy he must have had at the disappearance of the great schismatic rivals of the Caliphs of Baghdād.

THE ASSASSINS

The Assassins, or the Esmā'īlis of Persia are the Eastern branch of the Fātemid Caliphs of Egypt.

The name Assassin was originally Hashishin, meaning those who partook of hashish, the juice of Indian hemp. The Esmā'īlis partook of hashish, and as the most powerful instrument for the progress of their propaganda was the assassination of everyone who was thought to be the slightest hindrance to the advancement of their creed, the Crusaders, pronouncing the word Assassins instead of Hashishin, brought it to Europe as a designation for murderers.

When Nezāmi was born, Mohammad, the son of Bozorg Omid, was ruling as the leader of the Assassins in the great fortress of Alamut, near Hamedān. This Mohammad, true to the precepts of his predecessors, caused the assassination of a great number of rulers and nobles, amongst whom may be mentioned the Abbāsid Caliph Rāshed and the great judge of Qohestān, where Nezāmi was born. When the news of the assassination of the Caliph reached Alamut, there was rejoicing for a week in that stronghold, and from that date onwards the Caliphs of Baghdād went in fear of their lives. Mohammad, the son of Bozorg Omid, died in A.H. 555 (A.D. 1160) and his son, Hasan, succeeded him. Besides being the ruler of Alamut and the leader of the Assassins, he made claim to the Emāmate in A.H. 559 (A.D. 1164) in the presence of all his nobles and ministers at Alamut. He abrogated the laws of Islām and taught people inwardly to think of God but outwardly to do whatever they desired. During his time heresy and disregard of the laws of Mohammad reached their zenith, and he was murdered in A.H. 561 (A.D. 1166). His son, Mohammad, succeeded him in Alamut. He preached the precepts of his father to the utmost limit and sent his devotees to every part of the Mohammadan world for the assassina-

tion of the rulers and nobles who were regarded as hostile to the Esmā'ili doctrines.

His elder son, Jalālod-Din Hasan, was opposed to his father's religious ideas, consequently there was enmity between the two, and it is said that the son poisoned his father in A.H. 607 (A.D. 1210), i.e. about three years after the death of Nezāmi.

THE GHAZNAVID EMPIRE

At the time of the birth of Nezāmi, the great Empire of the Ghaznavids was already on the decline. Sanjar had marched on Ghaznin, defeated Arsalān Shāh's army, entered Ghaznin, taken possession of the Ghaznavid treasures, seated his own nephew, Bahrām Shāh, the step-brother of Arsalān Shāh, the son of Mas'ud, on the throne, and returned to Khorāsān. When Arsalān Shāh heard of the departure of Sanjar, he collected a large army from India and returned to Ghaznin to fight against his step-brother. Bahrām Shāh, not having enough power to resist his brother, Arsalān Shāh, fled. Then once more, with the help of Sanjar, he advanced on Ghaznin; Arsalān Shāh fled again. The army of Sanjar pursued and captured him and brought him to Bahrām Shāh, who put him to death in A.H. 512 (A.D. 1118). During his reign, Bahrām Shāh invaded India several times. He is important for our purpose, because Nezāmi, in dedicating his *Makhzanol Asrār* to his patron Bahrām Shāh, mentions two books, written by two renowned poets, both dedicated to two Bahrām Shāhs. One of these was this Ghaznavid ruler, the patron of Sana'i, and the other his own patron, the ruling prince of Arrān. At the end of the reign of Bahrām Shāh, the Ghurid king, Alā'od-Din Hosein, invaded the Ghaznavid territory and occupied Ghaznin. Bahrām Shāh fled to India; the Ghurid king made his own brother governor of Ghaznin and returned to his own territory. After his departure,

Bahrām Shāh, with a large army which he had collected from India, returned and occupied Ghaznin and captured the brother of the Ghurid king.

When Alā'od-Din heard this news, he proceeded again towards Ghaznin, but before he reached that city in A.H. 547 (A.D. 1152), Bahrām Shāh died. After his death, his son, Khosrou Shāh, was placed on the throne, but as the army of Alā'od-Din was approaching the city, he fled to Lahore. Alā'od-Din, the Ghurid ruler entered Ghaznin and perpetrated barbarous and savage atrocities on the inhabitants, appointed Gheyāsod-Din and Shojā'od-Din, his two nephews, governors of the Ghaznavid territory, and returned to Ghur. His two nephews succeeded at length in capturing Khosrou Shāh, whom they imprisoned in a fortress, where he died in A.H. 555 (A.D. 1160).

When Khosrou Shāh had fled from Ghaznin to Lahore, he had become king there, and after his death his son, Khosrou Malek, succeeded him. In A.H. 583 (A.D. 1187) Gheyāsod-Din, the nephew of Alā'od-Din, invaded India, entered Lahore, captured Khosrou Malek, sent him to Ghaznin, and imprisoned him there. After that, the Ghurids captured and put to death any descendants of the Ghaznavid whom they could lay hands on. Thus the Ghaznavid rule came to an end, not only in Persia but also in India. The Ghurid kings were descendants of a certain Hosein, who was a servant of the Ghaznavid Sultan Ebrāhim. Sultan Mas'ud of Ghazneh, the son of Ebrāhim, made this Hosein governor of the province of Ghur. In time Hosein became independent, and his descendants later, as we have just seen, brought that great empire to an end. This is one more instance of how the slaves and servants of great dynasties destroyed and absorbed those very same dynasties which had raised them from the lowest degree of servitude to the highest positions in the empire.

In concluding the life and times of Nezāmi, it is interesting to relate a story which we find in many

biographies, including the *Tazkeratosh Sho'arā* of Doulat Shāh, the Ātash Kadeh of Lotf Ali Beg, and the *Mer'ātol Kheyāl* of Shir Khān. It shows the high esteem in which Nezāmi was held in the hearts of his countrymen. It is stated there that King Qezel Arsالān was desirous of Nezāmi's company. He sent a messenger to ask him to attend his court, but the royal messenger was told that the poet was living a life of retirement, solitude, and devotion to God, and did not associate with kings and rulers. Qezel Arsالān, in order to test the poet, paid him a visit. The poet, through divine guidance and his power to perform miracles, understood the object of the king's visit. He caused a vision from the hidden world to appear before the eyes of the king, as soon as he entered the presence of Nezāmi. He saw there the poet seated on a most magnificent throne bejewelled with most beautiful precious stones. There were innumerable courtiers, attendants, and bodyguards dressed in gorgeous clothes, with belts studded with gems, standing before him. When the monarch saw the pomp and splendour of that court, he was stricken with awe and went forward to kiss Nezāmi's foot. At that moment the poet transformed himself from the invisible world. The king saw an old and humble man sitting upon a piece of felt at the mouth of a cave and having before him a book, a pen, an inkstand, and a rosary. The king humbly kissed the hand of the poet and, from that time onward, had a great belief in him. Nezāmi also had regard for the king and did at times visit his court.

مرا چون مخزن الاسرار گنجی
چه باید در هوس پیمود رنجی

AS I HAVE A TREASURE LIKE
MAKHZANOL ASRĀR, WHY SHOULD I
TROUBLE ABOUT ROMANCES?

MAKHZANOL ASRĀR

THE TREASURY OF MYSTERIES

- (2) 1. *In the Name of God, the most Merciful and Compassionate* is the key to the door of the treasury of the wise.
2. The Name of God is the beginning of thought and the end of speech. Complete thy thought and speech in His Name.
3. Existent before all creation, more eternal than all eternities,
4. Ancient Lord of the eternal universe, Decorator of the neck of the Pen with a necklace,
5. Revealer of the secrets of the mysterious heaven, secret Goal of those who know the divine mysteries,
- (3) 6. Source of every spring of liberality, Author of all existence,
7. He adorns the mountain with rubies, giving verdure to the earth and a ripple to water.
8. Guide to those who cultivate their souls, Source of light to those who partake of His daily bread,
9. He strings the fine thread of intellect with pearls and is the sight of the blind eye of reason.
10. He marks the brow of the saint. He crowns the kings of this world.
11. Destroyer of well matured plans, He it is who accepts excuses for shortcoming.

12. Protector of those who cry aloud in fear, Source of the counsel of the spiritually minded,

13. Beginning and end of Existence and Attributes, Creator and Destroyer of creation,

14. Compared with His Majesty which is greater than both worlds, our time from its beginning to its end is but an instant.

15. Who but God in this eternal universe could say : “ Whose is the Empire ? ”

16. He was, when all that is high and low was not ; He will be, when all that exists has come to an end.

(4) 17. Those who were nourished by eternal knowledge, have not solved this difficult problem.

18. Oh, what an ocean is His eternal knowledge ! Oh, what a desert is His eternal kingdom !

19. His eternity has no beginning ; neither has it any end.

20. The celestial maidens in the garden of thy form come from Him ; the light of the sight of thine eyes comes from Him.

21. The struggle of every living being is to do service to His Godhead.

22. His Existence alone has permanence ; He is sanctified who is not transient.

23. Gratitude is due to Him from the sun and the mountains for His thousand bounties to them.

24. When His munificence was veiled by light, the thorn was far from the rose and the cane from sweetness.

25. When by His liberality He created generosity, existence was freed from the bondage of non-existence.

26. For the sake of these few ruined villages, the work of heaven was entangled.

27. Until He had untied this knot which transcends the power of thought, the tresses of the night were not freed from the grasp of the day.

28. When He scattered the pearls of the necklace of heaven, He combed the dust of night from the tresses of non-existence.

(5) 29. He made seven knots on the girdle of the earth, when He made the spheres of heaven.

30. He made a robe for the sun and a cloak for the moon from this white cloth of day and this black cloth of night.

31. He loosened drops of rain from the heart of the sea; He drew the spring of life from the lips of heaven.

32. He poured the wine of dawn into the dark clay; He poured a draught of that wine into the mouth of the stone.

33. He made the lustre of the pearl and the richness of the ruby from the fire and water which He mingled together.

34. He placed the blood of the heart of the earth, shed on account of the severity of the wind, in the heart of the red ruby.

35. He made the garden of generosity as beautiful as the sky; He made the fame of the nightingale of speech reach to heaven.

36. He gave sweet dates to the palm tree of speech; He gave the oyster shell of the ear to the pearl of speech.

37. He veiled sleep. He clothed the water with the garment of life.

38. He spread the tresses of the earth on the shoulders of the world. He painted the mole of sin upon the face of Adam.

(6) 39. He cleansed dishonour from the face of gold.
He washed the blood from the rose with the spring cloud.

40. He lightened the darkness of the skies by the stars. He entrusted the soul of the morning breeze to sweet herbs.

41. He placed the blood of the world in the heart of the clay. He placed the pulse of wisdom in the beat of the heart.

42. He set laughter on the lips to destroy grief. He seated Venus at the banquet of night's minstrelsy.

43. The perfume of the night is diffused by His musk-sellers. The new moon wears the ring of His servitude.

44. A stone thrown from His royal tent broke the head of soaring eloquence.

45. Halting imagination travelled far and wide and returned from His door empty-handed.

46. The mind travelled far but did not find Him; the eye searched far and wide but found none like Him.

47. Reason entered, saying : " I have sought Him." This was presumption ; I chastised it.

48. Those drawn by the point of His compass join us in our search of Him.

49. The birds on the Tree of Paradise soar towards Him ; those who walk in heaven knock also at the same door.

50. As for heaven, it wears the collar of His servitude, and as for the heart of the earth, it is full of love of Him.

(7) 51. Unity lives by His omnipotent name ; eternity is the pillar of the throne of His empire.

52. The sighs of the weary are His favoured guests ;
His swift messengers are the feet of captives.

53. The heart which is purer than the soul, lays claim
to being the dust of His threshold.

54. Compared with a rose of the garden, grown from
the seed on the dust of His threshold, Eram is but an
idle tale.

55. The dust of Nezāmi which exists by His aid, is
soil for the seed of His unity.

FIRST PRAYER

On punishment and the wrath of God

56. Oh God ! From Thee all existence has sprung ;
through Thee the impotent dust is strong.

57. Creation rests under Thy banner ; we live through
Thee, as Thou livest by Thine own Essence.

58. Thy Being has neither form nor body ; Thou
resemblest none, and none resembles Thee.

59. Thou art unchangeable, and Thou didst not and
wilt not die.

60. We are all transient ; eternity belongs to Thee
alone. The high and sacred empire is Thine.

61. The earth is fixed by Thy command. Thou makest
the azure vault without pillars.

62. Who but Thee gave the curve of the polo-stick
to heaven ? Who but Thee gave to the cauldron of the
body the salt of life ?

63. When Thy eternity calls on the chequer-board
of night and day, who but Thee can say : " I am the
Lord ? "

(8) 64. Love could no longer endure the attraction of
Thy name, if peace came not from Thee.

65. When Thy generosity took the road of the world,
the earth bore a heavy load.

66. The world would have been ruptured, if it had
not been born from the loins of Thy munificence.

67. The necklace of devotion is threaded by Thee ;
worship save of Thee is unlawful.

68. May he be silent who does not speak of Thee ;
may all be forgotten which is not in remembrance of
Thee.

69. The cup-bearer of the night begs for Thy cup ;
the bird of dawn prays to Thy name.

70. Draw back the curtain and come out alone ;
even if I were that veil, rend it.

71. Show heaven its impotence ; loosen the knots
of the earth.

72. Erase the signs of the universe ; change the forms
of matter.

73. Give back the speech of the tongue to the Pen ;
discharge the debt of the earth to non-existence.

(9) 74. Delay the progress of tyrants ; remove selfish
desires from the seekers of jewels.

75. Break asunder this universe of six dimensions ;
pull down the nine-tiered pulpit of heaven.

76. Throw down the casket of the moon upon the
terrestrial globe ; throw the stone of Saturn at the cup
of Venus.

77. Scatter this necklace which illuminates the night ;
break the wings of the bird of night and day.

78. Scrape this layer of clay off the earth, and say
to this brick of the earth : " Cease to be."

79. Wipe the dust of night from the brow of the
universe ; say to Jupiter : " Fall," and to Leo : " Do
not rise."

80. How long wilt Thou allow this new scheme of the universe to continue? Bring back a veil of the old order.

81. Destroy the scheme and free the neck of heaven from the chain of motion and immobility.

82. Pour water upon the fire of injustice; lower pride to the dust.

83. Burn the tables of the astronomers; close the eyes of the Sun-worshippers.

84. Deprive this constellation of the orb of the moon; draw back this curtain from these speculations,

85. So that they may testify to Thy divinity and confess their own non-existence.

86. The birds gird their loins, saying: "We are Thy slaves"; roses are filled with life, saying: "We live by Thee."

(10) 87. There is no blood money for him whom Thou killest, and there is no fine for whomsoever Thou hangest.

88. Thou makest the stage of the journey by night to be long; Thou bringest back the sun which has gone down.

89. Although Thou mayest be angry with many, none can complain.

90. Thou hast given the light of reason to the soul; Thou hast imparted the savour of the heart to the tongue.

91. From Thee heaven received its motion, the fixed star its immobility. The garden of existence received the water of life from Thee.

92. The airs and graces of the wild rose come not from the morning breeze, but from the dust of Thy feet, its collyrium.

93. The calyx of the lily, Thy cup, has tongue only for Thy praise.

94. Nezāmi, the slave, who sings the song of Thy unity, is in both worlds the dust of Thy road.

95. Make his mind prosperous by the knowledge of Thee ; free his neck from the snare of sorrow.

SECOND PRAYER

On the bounty and forgiveness of God

96. Oh God ! Thou wast from the beginning when we were not ; Thou wilt live eternally and we shall perish.

97. The universe obeys Thine order ; the shoulder of heaven carries Thy saddle cloth.

98. We are the homeless beggars at Thy door ; we have the ring of Thy servitude in our ears.

99. We bear Thy brand, and kings do not accept the branded dog for the chase.

(11) 100. Thou wilt accept us, because we are from Thy garden. We are the dove which wears the collar of Thy servitude and the dog which bears Thy brand.

101. We do not expect aid from any helper ; we have no other support but Thee.

102. All these hopes and fears are for Thy sake ; therefore forgive us, oh generous One.

103. Help us, because we have no helper. If Thou dost drive us away, to whom shall we turn ?

104. What is this tongue, and what is this speech ? Speech and silence are both to be regretted.

105. What an immensity between my insignificance and the praise of God's glory !

106. How dared this soul traverse this sea ? How dared this heart drink from this spring ?

107. We are helpless as those who are dumb, therefore we repeat : " He who knows God."

108. Since I am ashamed of my useless speech, forgive me by Thy bounty.

109. Although we come before Thee in our destitution, yet we come hoping in Thee, oh God !

110. Befriend us, oh Helper of the sorrowful ! Help us, oh Helper of the helpless !

111. The caravan has passed, see how far we lag behind. Oh Thou, our Helper, look on our helplessness !

112. With whom shall we take refuge? Thou art without equal. To whom shall we fly? Thou art our Helper.

113. We will not make a shrine except of Thy door ; who will cherish us, if Thou wilt not ?

114. Who begs as we do? Who laments more than we?

115. Forgive our sins, because we pray to Thee ; help us, because we take refuge in Thee.

116. Oh God, Nezāmi's name is honoured in Thee ; his greatness comes from serving Thee.

117. Send the blessing of praise to his tongue ; give his soul knowledge of Thee.

In praise of the Holy Prophet, the prayers of God be upon him and upon his family

(12) 118. When *Alef* was drawn on the First Tablet, it was fixed as a beading to the door of Ahmad.

119. When *Alef* gave the empire to the ring of *Hā*, it gave that same *Hā* a collar from *Dāl* and a belt from *Mim*,

120. Therefore it received from *Mim* and *Dāl* the circle of the empire and the line of perfection.

121. Under this dome of turquoise bricks, there grew a fresh tangerine tree from the garden of Paradise.

122. It is the nature of a tangerine tree that in the world it should first bring forth fruit and then blossom.

123. When "*I was a Prophet*" carried the banner forward, it entrusted the completion of prophetship to Mohammad.

124. The moon is the bezel of emerald; its gem is the seal of Mohammad.

125. The ear of the world carries the *Mim* of his bondage; the two worlds themselves submit to him.

126. He is the great Surveyor, and the Anointed is his slave; they are both called messengers of good tidings.

(13) 127. He is illiterate, but speaks with eloquence from the *Alef* of Adam to the *Mim* of the Messiah.

128. He is straight like *Alef* in his promise and fidelity. He is the beginning and the end of the prophets.

129. He is the most brilliant centre of the compass of "*Be thou*," the centre of the all inclusive circle of speech.

130. The whole world of literature is but an empty sound compared with his speech, and the heavens are a girdle for his waist.

131. Although he has no pride, yet he did not bow down to the world.

132. The veiled ones of heaven are the doorkeepers of his sanctuary. Chastity itself is nurtured by him.

133. His dust cleanses sin from the eyes. His departure wrests revenue from Mecca.

134. His silence is heart-ravishing speech; his friendship is a virtue which destroys faults.

135. To quell the disturbance by him is the heart's delight, also there can be no escape from the madness of his love.

136. He was the leader of all and the beginning of all good. He was the great fixed star, but moved swiftly.

137. In his heart the divine candle was lit ; he learnt the lesson of eternity from the beginning to the end.

138. The source of the sun, dependent on him, is but half the crescent moon of the night of his Ascent to Heaven.

139. He was the crowned monarch of the Night of Ascension ; he enthroned kings with belts and crowns.

140. He gave ease to weary breath ; he shod the heavenly steed which carried him by night.

(14) 141. The riders of speech stood motionless ready with their steeds, expecting his return.

142. When the chequered steed ceased to gallop, Nezāmi was appointed as its groom.

On the Ascension

143. One midnight when the sun set the world-illuminating torch in motion,

144. The eyes of the nine heavens were his retinue ; Venus and the moon carried his torch.

145. He left the seven spheres, the four quarters, and the six dimensions in the secret chamber of creation.

146. Day bade farewell to his footsteps ; night was in ecstasy at his advent.

147. The eyes of the strangers were heavy with sleep, when he turned quickly away from sleep.

148. With the cage of the body, the bird of his heart flew away from this prison to its own resting-place.

149. The birds, namely, the angels, remained behind helpless. Heaven threw down its cloak.

150. His body was lighter than the heart; his divine bird flew with the cage.

151. As he moved on step by step, he was seized and carried further and further towards divine bliss.

(15) 152. Since both worlds had their eyes on him, they bowed their heads adoring him.

153. His feet carried him hundreds of stages as one stage, because he had the highest honour.

154. His exalted steed threw down its saddle-cloth upon the shoulder of all existence.

155. The sea of the earth became a mine and he its pearl. The heaven bore him as its crown.

156. Taurus took the jewels of that dark perfumed night from the Bull of the earth.

157. He took the crown from Cancer and the belt from Orion as gifts for that journey.

158. The Virgo which received fresh hyacinth from him, threw the cluster at Leo.

159. Venus, who weighs the night, held Libra in her hand to estimate the honour of his night.

160. Libra bowed down to the glory of that night, because she had not weights enough in her scales to weigh its dignity.

(16) 161. His healing breath poured balm on the tail of this Scorpion of the azure realm.

162. When he hit the target with the arrow from the bow, the poison left the kid which was on his table.

163. He became Joseph of the bucket like the sun; he became Jonah of the fish like the water bucket.

164. When he set the throne of the Pleiades on the sign Aries, the army of flowers pitched its tents on the plain.

165. The pleasure house of the earth was decked with the colours of spring by the rose of that exalted garden of Paradise.

166. He recited the ten verses of courtesy from the Koran ; he asked pardon of the prophets for his approach.

167. His footsteps rent the curtain of the stars. The shoulders of the angels bore his banner.

168. Midnight was filled with the musk of his lips. The crescent moon was the shoe cast by his steed.

169. The canter of Borāq was like lightning in the dark night of that event.

(17) 170. Like a partridge, the falcon flew dove-like with the glory of the Phoenix.

171. The Tree of Paradise touched the front of his robe. High heaven laid hands on his skirt.

172. The night turned into day ; lo, what a wonderful day ! The rose turned into cypress ; lo, what a wonderful spring !

173. Amongst all the roses and narcissi of that garden, his narcissus had the collyrium which takes away false vision.

174. He was passed on like a rose from hand to hand up this turquoise-carpeted stair, till he reached the foot of the Throne.

175. His fellow travellers threw down their shields ; they broke their pinions and shed their feathers.

176. He in amazement, like the strangers on the road, knocked at the door of that Threshold.

177. The veiled angels, His doorkeepers, with one accord helped him down from his litter.

178. He went on that road which must be travelled alone ; one foot knew not where the other would tread.

179. All but him remained on the Threshold of that Mystery ; even he lost consciousness of himself.

180. His foot was the crown of existence ; the heavens had need of that provender.

181. When he drew his pen through all words, he raised his banner above the heavens.

182. The lord of life urged the body along the road, so long as his physical body drew the breath of life.

183. When the journey to heaven ended, the heart and the soul were charged with their own work.

184. The body hastened to the place of its origin. Vision became such that imagination could not follow it.

(18) 185. The eyes which are fit to look upon the Eternal Light will not lower themselves to vain thoughts.

186. The road of Eternity was before his feet. The curtain of physical creation was withdrawn.

187. When he travelled the endless road, he raised his head above the veil of nature.

188. His high spirits reached a stage beyond time and space through the great enlightenment of his heart.

189. Jealousy laid hold on him from behind that curtain ; at the same time bewilderment held him back.

190. The hand of Union drew back the curtain from the glorious door of the house of Beauty.

191. His feet transferred their function to his head. His soul gazed on that Vision.

192. He travelled without the labour of his feet ; he sprang, but was not allowed a resting place.

193. As words leave the lips, so he departed from himself ; therefore his greeting was accepted.

194. He saw the sign of that Light which knows no decline, with eyes which were beyond imagination.

195. The vision of Him is free from accident and matter, because He is beyond accident and matter.

(19) 196. He saw God as the Absolute, and this is acceptable ; God can be seen.

197. One must not deny that he saw with his eyes ; whoso does not admit his vision is blind.

198. The Prophet saw Him, not with a different eye, but with this physical eye.

199. The vision of that curtain was not spacial ; the journey on that road was timeless.

200. Whoso was permitted to see behind that curtain, went on the way which is not a road.

201. He is, but not in any place ; He who is bound by space is not God.

202. Do not deny His permanence ; it is blasphemy. Do not limit Him to space ; it is ignorance.

203. He drank the wine which God had prepared ; he poured a draught of that wine into our clay.

204. Eternal Grace was the companion of his soul. Divine Compassion was the cherisher ; he was the cherished.

205. His lips were adorned with a sweet smile ; he asked favours for his people.

206. His spirit was enriched by that Treasure ; all his aims were realised.

207. He was strengthened by that Audience ; he faced the toils of this world.

208. He returned from that journey which demands love. He went and came back in an instant of time.

209. Oh thou, whose word is a seal on our tongue ! Thy scent is the elixir of our life.

210. Complete the cycle of generosity ; entrust the completion of speech to Nezāmi.

The first eulogy (to the Prophet)

(20) 211. The canopy of the nine thrones of the seven stars, the end and the ornament of the prophets,

212. Ahmad, the Prophet, the dust of whose feet is wisdom, has both worlds tied to his saddle strap.

213. Fairest hyacinth in the garden of glory, most precious jewel of the sea of mystery,

214. His tresses are Virgo which shines by day ; his essence gives brightness to the sun.

215. His sweet lips did not laugh aloud, that his pearls may not destroy the lustre of the shell.

216. Why did the stone break his pearl, since his essence did not wound even the stony hearts ?

217. The stone of his accuser broke a pearl in his casket.

218. The pearl was freed from the narrow casket ; it is not strange that stones should produce gems.

219. Ay, because the heart was of the stone, it had the dryness of melancholia.

220. How could this stone rejoice, if it were not a breaker of pearls and a grinder of rubies ?

(21) 221. Had the stone enough silver to pay compensation, that it came and wounded that small mouth ?

222. The gems, produced from stones, are all compensation for his wounded lip.

223. How could the gem, mined from the earth, compensate for the pearl of his tooth?

224. In compensation for his tooth, victory obeyed him with the utmost effort and sincerity.

225. When he rinsed his mouth with the bloody water of the stone, he rightly took the name *Munificence*.

226. He took hold of the tooth and gave it gladly as a thanksgiving and surrendered it.

227. He had no desire of possession, because in both worlds he needed nothing.

228. In the ranks of his army on the field of battle, his hand was the standard and his tongue the dagger.

229. His dagger sacrificed the tooth ; a dagger like a saw is useless.

230. What was the purpose of these troubles? That mankind might gaze upon his generosity and leave the thorn and take the fruit from his flower.

(22) 231. The garden is full of roses ; why speak of thorns ? The string is threaded with beads ; why speak of the tail of the serpent ?

232. Abandon the crow for the tail of the peacock ; remain in the garden with the song of the nightingale.

233. The poetic talent of Nezāmi, which through him is like a rose, is a sweetly melodious nightingale on his rose.

The second eulogy (to the Prophet)

234. O thou, whose body is purer than the pure soul ! Thy soul is nourished by *May my soul be sacrificed to thee.*

235. Thou art the centre of the circle of mercy ; thou art the destroyer of the dot of *zahmat*.

236. Thou art the moon of the Arabian travellers ; thou art the king of the kings of Irān.

237. They seek the path by thee, and thou dost not guide. Thou art thyself the lord of the village ; yet thou art not in the village.

238. When the great like thee go on a journey, they do not themselves alone consume the provision for all.

239. What hast thou brought back for us from that table at which thou hast partaken of fresh dates ?

240. Open thy mouth, that all may partake of sweet-meats and take fresh dates from the water of thy mouth.

241. Oh thou, whose dark tresses are the day of salvation, the fire of the love of thee is the water of life.

242. Reason is distracted for love of thy face ; thy tresses are the chains of the maniacs.

243. The heavens are a slave to thy girdle. The dawn, compared with the sun of thy face, is but a smile.

(23) 244. The impure were cleansed of vice by thee. The navel of the earth obtained its musk-bladder from thee.

245. That land is loaded with musk by thy musk-scented dust.

246. Thy dust is better than the wind of Solomon ; how should I compare it with paradise ? It is better than the Guardian Angel of paradise.

247. The Ka'beh, the altar of thy devotions, thirsts for a draught of the rose water of thine elixir.

248. The world holds thy crown and thy throne ; thy throne is the earth, and thy crown is the heavens.

249. Thou, who art the light of the great, hast no shadow ; thou art thyself the shadow of the light of God.

250. The four standards are the pillars of Islām ; the five prayers are the insignia of empire.

251. The dust of the abject has become a garden through thee. The eyes of strangers have their sight from thee.

252. Since thy foot has trodden in the dark night upon the crown of the revolving heaven,

253. Thou hast filled its lap with gold and pearls and made the buttons of its robe of small gold bricks.

254. In the oyster shell of the dawn, the morning breeze mixes the ambergris of thy perfume with the hands of purity,

(24) 255. Therefore the army of ambergris lowered its standard wherever the morning breezes blew.

256. If thou gavest the perfume which thy ringlets diffuse for the price of the two worlds, thou wouldest give it cheaply.

257. The Tree of Heaven is a ribbon decorating thy robe ; the heavenly Throne is an usher in thy court.

258. When the light of thy soul shines in the morning, that Throne will be but a mote in that sunshine.

259. If from the Dawn of Eternity a mirror had not reflected thy light, how could thy light have fallen upon the dust of the earth ?

260. Oh thou, who art both worlds, why art thou under the earth ? Thou art not an earthly treasure ; why art thou bound to the dust ?

261. It is necessary to entrust the treasure to the dust, so long as thou art in the dust, oh pure treasure.

262. Thy poverty is a ruin sufficient for thy treasure. Thy shadow is a moth sufficient for thy candle.

263. The curved heaven is the target of thy prayers ;
the wheel of its Aquarius is the rope of thy well.

264. These two revolving black and white attendants
are messengers on the road amongst thy train.

(25) 265. Reason seeks a cure ; thou art its physician. The
moon is the traveller ; thou art her object of wonder.

266. Arise, turn the night of the expectant into day,
and light the poetic mind of Nezāmi with joy.

The third eulogy (to the Prophet)

267. O thou, who wearest a veil from Medina and
one from Mecca, how much longer shall the sun be
behind a cloud ?

268. If thou art a moon, show us a little of thy light ;
and if thou art a rose, send us perfume from thy garden.

269. Those who expect thee are dying of expectation.
We are crying out against thee, oh help us.

270. Come to Irān, do not stay in Arabia ; thou hast
the light and dark steeds of night and day.

271. Adorn the Empire and refresh the world. Fill
both worlds with thy voice.

272. Strike the die thyself, that the amirs may not
strike it ; read the proclamation thyself, that the pro-
claimers may be silenced.

273. The dust of thy feet gave a perfume to the faith ;
the wind of discord arose and blew away that perfume.

274. Withdraw authority from those who live at ease.
Cleanse this pulpit from the impure.

275. They live in the house of demons, drive them
out ; throw them into the granary of non-existence.

276. Give them less provender, because they are
gluttons ; make the provender thine own, because they
are plunderers.

(26) 277. We are all body, come thou and be our soul ;
we are all ants, be thou our Solomon.

278. On one side they make a breach in the faith,
and on the other they lie in ambush.

279. Thou art the leader, why is the caravan alone ?
Thou holdest the centre, why is the standard elsewhere ?

280. Either send an Ali into the ranks of the battle ;
or send an Omar on to the road of Satan.

281. Throw darkness upon the moon of Yaman.
Raise thy head like a moon from the silk brocade.

282. Be the helper of the captives ; destroy the
hypocrites.

283. It is enough to sleep for five hundred and seventy
years ; the sun is high, hasten to the assembly.

284. Arise and order the Angel of Death to blow out
these few candles.

285. Be the secret behind the curtain of mystery.
We are all asleep, be thou awake.

286. Stretch out thy hand and help us all against the
calamities of this transitory house.

287. Nothing that is thy pleasure is aught but good ;
none can hold thee responsible for thine actions.

288. If thou lookest favourably upon us, thou wilt
suffice for all our needs.

289. Describe a circle with thy finger, so that what-
ever exists may be bestowed upon thee.

(27) 290. Who can intercede with thee on the day of
judgment for forgiveness for a handful of dust ?

291. If thou drawest back the veil, both worlds will
come to ecstasy.

292. The brain of Nezāmi which seeks knowledge of thee, lives by the ambergris of thy perfume.

293. By his prayers, bestow a perfume of fidelity upon him. Give to a beggar an empire like that of Fereidun.

The fourth eulogy (to the Prophet)

294. Oh thou, the jewel of the crown of the prophets, giving crowns to kings,

295. All in this house, whoever they are, whether strangers or those of thy retinue, are dependent upon thee.

296. Although the first couplet was dedicated to thy name; yet for the sake of the rhyme thy name stood at the end.

297. When the ordinance was made, this ruined world prospered through thee and through Adam.

298. The material of which the house is built, is first water and then brick.

299. Thou art Adam, and thou art Noah; nay, thou art better than both. Thou dost untie the one knot of them both.

(28) 300. For Adam, who was defiled by that grain, repentance was a wholesome conserve of roses.

301. In his garden, heartfelt repentance is thy perfume; his conserve of roses is the dust of thy street.

302. When the heart partook of the sweet conserve of repentance from thee, the conserve of roses lost its sweetness.

303. They made the ball of acceptance in eternity and threw it into the ranks on the plain of the heart.

304. Unskilful Adam came forward to strike that ball with his own polo-stick,

305. But when his polo-pony strayed after ears of corn, the ball remained behind, and he left the field.

306. Noah, who reached the water of life parched with thirst, mistook the flood-water for the spring.

307. When the turn of the child, Abraham, came, he went half-way and fell several times.

308. Since the heart of David panted, his melody was fitting for this tenor and bass.

309. Solomon, being stained with worldly empire, kept within the bounds of respect and did not seek this crown.

(29) 310. Joseph did not taste that water ; he saw no sign but the rope and the bucket.

311. Khezr turned back from this arid journey and found that his skirt was wet with the water of that spring.

312. Moses saw his hands empty of this bowl ; he broke the glass on the rock of *Show me*.

313. Messiah did not intend to carry off this grain, because he was one of those accused in the house.

314. Thou alone, like heaven, didst discard all and threwest thy shadow over this work.

315. This book was sealed with thy name, and this proclamation came to an end with thine advent.

316. Arise and ordain a better scheme than that of the revolving heaven. The heavens are idle ; work thou.

317. The horizon is the boundary of thy polo-ground ; the ball of the earth is in the curve of thy polo-stick.

318. Until the dust of non-existence rises from annihilation, gallop and urge on thy steed, because the ground is thine.

319. What is annihilation that it should take the water from thy bowl, or base non-existence that it should call on thy name?

320. Bring non-existence to naught, annihilate annihilation.

(30) 321. Oh thou, whose revelation is the speech of the speechless and balm for the affliction of the broken-hearted,

322. Reason guided the ship of the soul through the sea of blood to the shore by thy laws.

323. Thy threshold is the shrine of the nine heavens. The anemone of the six days of creation hangs in thy tresses.

324. The empire will be entangled like thy locks, if one hair falls from thy head.

325. Thou readest what is not written on parchment; without words thou knowest the inmost thoughts of the mind.

326. Thy fingers wrote not, so that thy words may not be censured.

327. The words of all men are subject to spoiling fingers; thy words are safe from the finger of any man.

328. The dust of thy threshold is a sweet loaf; thy sweet lips are pistachio-nuts and jujube-fruits.

329. In the desert of love, one morsel of thy sweet loaf is ample provision for the forty days' journey of love.

330. Thou art the fairest morning of my salvation. I am the dust of thy feet, because thou art my water of life.

331. Thy dust is itself the garden of my soul. Thy garden is my soul and my world.

332. I put thy dust in the eyes of Nezāmi. I carry thy saddle-cloth on the shoulder of my servitude.

333. I rise like the breeze and settle like dust on that garden which is pure as the soul,

334. So that, when the elect anoint themselves with pure ambergris, they should make my dust the ambergris for their head.

*In praise of King Fakhrod-Din Bahrām Shāh,
the son of Dāvud*

(31) 335. I who in this circle which goes round the world am tied to the city like the centre of a point,

336. Have no opportunity to stretch my limbs in comfort. I have the shadow but not the glory of the Phœnix.

337. My foot is sunk deep in this mire; my hand is on the saddle-strap of heaven.

338. I lowered the crown of my head to beneath my feet, and I made a footprint of my knee-cap.

339. The mirror of my heart on my knee-cap has become the great brightness of my face.

340. I who occupied myself with this mirror, looked through the mirror of my physical eye

341. To see from which mirror light may come, or from which fire water may reach me.

342. When the eye of reason with just judgment quickly searched the world,

343. It saw, of that essence which is in the spirit, one who is the benefactor of the noble-minded,

344. The mighty king whose fortune is victorious, the rose tree of this turquoise-coloured garden,

345. A Khezr with the dignity of Alexander, of just judgment, the fixed star which determines the astronomical tables and explains the *Almagest*.

346. He who is first in the purpose of existence, and for whose sake the Verse of Purpose was revealed,

347. The crowned king, owner of Solomon's signet ring, the pride of the world, King Fakhrod-Din.

348. His descent from David makes the name of Solomon befit his dignity.

(32) 349. Through him the banner of Isaac is raised aloft. If he has an enemy, it is an Esmā'ili.

350. He is single-hearted; he holds the six dimensions and the seven spheres; Bahrām Shāh is the centre of the nine circles.

351. It is he who, because of his valour in the trial of strength, assigns a grave as a portion to Bahrām-e Gur.

352. King of kings in his great ability, famous in the world for his great wisdom,

353. He sits on the throne of the Sultan and the Caliph and is the conqueror of Mesopotamia and the Abkhāz.

354. More learned and just than all living, most beloved and noblest of the munificent,

355. His religion is the heaven and his kingdom the stars. His country is the oyster shell; the dust of his threshold is the pearl.

356. He is the spring and the sea full of fish and of pearls, a peaceful spring and a full sea.

357. The sun escapes like quicksilver because of his generous hand.

358. The brilliant pure ruby on his belt laughs at the ruby on the belt of the sun.

359. The calamity of this window of lapis lazuli struck him who laid hands on him.

360. His bell deafens the ears of heaven ; his breath breaks the mirror of the moon.

361. A better beginning than happiness, a better end than the milk of human kindness,

362. May his hand, which is the cup-bearer of the bowl of generosity, last for ever, because the bowl is everlasting.

The discourse on audience (to the king)

363. Oh thou, who art the glory of the essence of mankind, the sight of the eye of the world,

(33) 364. The heaven which gives thee continual victory, is pregnant in its nine wombs with one secret of thine.

365. The ears of the two fish above and beneath thee are the shell for the pearl of thy sword.

366. The moon which draws its sword by night, has thrown down its shield before thy sword.

367. The brightness of thy sword, which is like the waters of the Euphrates, has broken the jar of the water of life.

368. He who sleeps during thy deluge, would be carried away by the flood, even if he were like Noah.

369. Thy bowl gives understanding like that of Kekhosrou and Jamshid. Thy face burns the moth of the sun.

370. Be lion-hearted ; thou conquerest the brave. I said lion in error ; thou conquerest lions.

371. Heaven fears thee more than it fears the lions of this thicket.

372. Who on the field of battle would have such a high heart and such daring as to boast to thee of valour and courage?

373. Thy hand of desire is absolute over all that exists under the blue sky.

374. Thou hast given office to many, but the angels alone gave thee office.

375. Fortune chose thee to be the end of time. The wind wrote *Solomon* on thy dust.

(34) 376. God who gave thee youth and empire, gave thee the empire; do with it what thou wilt.

377. Dust becomes gold by thy acceptance; poison becomes sugar by thy remembrance.

378. If Fereidun does not drink wine with thee, the snakes of Zahhāk will grow on his shoulders.

379. Drink wine; thou hast a minstrel and a cup-bearer. Why grieve? Thou hast the eternal kingdom.

380. Thou art the protector of the empire and the refuge of kings; thou ownest the sword and the crown.

381. Though with the awe-inspiring sword thou tookest the crown and the throne,

382. Thou scatterest treasure like the Caliphs; thou givest crowns and takest away thrones.

383. The point of thy sword is over the crown. Why shouldst thou not take tribute from the kings?

384. That head on which thy foot rests, takes a throne. How fortunate is that heart in which thou hast a place.

385. The owl in thy era gives good fortune like the Phœnix. The head which reaches thy presence is lowered to the ground.

386. The notorious reprobate is guided. Because of thee, complaint has come to complain.

387. Under the hoof of thy steed, which is the pillar of the earth, thy enemy is nailed to the ground like a horseshoe.

388. The seven heavens are a casket for thy jewel ; the eight paradises are a pennon on thy standard.

389. He who does not obey thy order, finds the crown on his head turn to a halter.

390. Thou art the master of all and every art. Thou art the soul of both worlds in one body.

(35) 391. Punish generosity ; kindle the candle of speech.

392. Bestow the exalted robe of honour on servitude ; grant the hope of acceptance to Nezāmi.

393. Though speech is nourishing and life-giving, it is lean when it reaches thy table.

394. This sea and this mine are without pearls and rubies ; give them pearls from the hand and rubies from the lips,

395. And to him who is envious, give ungrudgingly rubies from the arrow and pearls from the sword.

396. Since heaven gave thee a happy omen, may the conclusion of thy work be acceptable.

397. On thy road are those who are prosperous and those who are destroyed. Prosperity is mine ; destruction is the lot of thine enemy.

398. Thy victory has raised its head like a banner, and thy foe has lowered his head like a pen.

On the honour and dignity of this book

399. I who am the singer of this new rose, am the melodious nightingale of thy garden.

400. I live on the road of thy love ; I ring a bell down thy street.

401. I have not accepted a loan from any man ; I have spoken what my heart has bidden me to say.

402. I have created a new magic ; I have made a figure from a new mould.

403. For a while I studied the sciences of polite learning ; I embroidered the magic curtain of the dawn.

404. It holds the capital of poverty and of kingship ; it holds the *Treasury of the Divine Mysteries*.

(36) 405. No fly has tainted its sugar ; neither has its fly contaminated the sugar of any man.

406. Noah throws down his shield, when he reaches this sea ; Khezr breaks his pitcher at this spring.

407. I put up this beauty to be raffled for by all the kings ; thy name was the fortunate winner.

408. Two books came from two famous places ; each was dedicated to a Bahrām Shāh.

409. One has minted gold from the old mine, and the other has produced pearls from the new sea.

410. One has raised its banner in Ghaznin, and the other has struck the Roman die on its coin.

411. Although the words on that coin are like gold, my golden coin is better still.

412. Though my baggage is less than his ; yet I have a better customer.

413. The style is wonderful, accept it. It will not be strange, if thou shouldst favour it,

414. Because these words which are set in a better order than the design of a garden, are not lit by external means like a lamp.

415. In this world, it is more prosperous than the world itself, newer than the heaven, yet born before it.

416. It takes no colour from any existing sign ; it does not fit any existing tongue.

417. None has touched the provender of speech at thy table ; partake thou of it.

418. If it is savoury, partake of it ; may it nourish thee ; if not, mayest thou forget it.

419. On the night when thou sittest at the table of heaven, throw down a bone to me,

(37) 420. Because, indeed, I boast that I am thy dog ; I am proud to be thy slave.

421. Out of all the kings who have shown me fidelity, I have desired to attach myself to thee.

422. My service will at last lead to some recognition, and the end of this cord will reach its place.

423. Though the eulogists have prostrated themselves at this enduring threshold,

424. They stand respectfully before Nezāmi ; he is different ; who are these others ?

425. I who have remained in this, their stage, have travelled on a stage beyond them.

426. I made my sword from the diamond of my tongue ; I beheaded all who followed me.

427. The sword of Nezāmi which strikes off heads, is not blunted, though it is old.

428. Though this dignity itself is unrivalled ; yet my foot aspires to a still higher position.

429. The pinnacle is high ; I soar above it, maybe that I shall prosper by my high spirit,

430. So that, perchance, by the light of thy judgment, I may place my head where thy foot rests.

431. I follow thee, that I may reach to heaven. If thou bearest me not, how shall I reach it?

432. It was my intention during these last months to renew the covenant of my prostration before the king.

433. Though in this circle which they have drawn, they have closed the road of my exit,

434. I desired so eagerly to come before thee to receive increase of favours, that my body could not contain my soul,

(38) 435. But when I looked again, there were lions all the way; before and behind me were daggers and swords;

436. Yet in this place which is encircled by swords, I read the Khotbeh to thee with a loud voice.

437. I have sprinkled thy threshold with the water of speech; I am the pebble which has remained in its place.

438. Oh sun, I am like a mote before thee; may my morning prayers be answered!

439. My heart has become a sea pouring out pearls to thee; the jewel of my soul has become the ornament on thy girdle.

440. So long as night and day exist, may thy nights be days; may the jewel of thy kingship illuminate the night.

441. May this house of thine be auspicious, and may that house of thine be yet more auspicious.

Discourse on the excellence of speech

442. The first movement of the Pen produced the first letter of the Word.

443. When they drew back the curtain of non-existence, the first manifestation was the Word.

444. Until the voice of the Heart spoke, the soul did not submit its free self to the clay.

445. When the Pen began to move, it opened the eyes of the world by means of the Word.

446. Without speech the world has no voice; much has been spoken, but the Word has not diminished.

447. In the language of love, speech is our soul. We are speech; these ruins are our palaces.

448. The line of every thought which is written, is bound to the wings of the birds of speech.

449. In this ever-changing old world, there is no subtlety finer than speech.

(39) 450. The beginning of thought and the final reckoning is speech; remember this word.

451. Kings have thought it worthy of a crown, and others have called it by other names.

452. At times the voice of speech is raised by banners; at other times it is written with the pen.

453. It wins more victories than banners, and it conquers more empires than the pen.

454. Though speech does not show its beauty to the worshippers of imagination,

455. We who have looked upon speech, are its lovers, and by it we live.

456. The laggards were warmed by its fire; the eager travellers drew water from it.

457. In this world it is more prosperous than the world itself, newer than heaven, yet born before it.

458. It takes no colour from any existing sign; it does not fit any existing tongue,

459. To such a degree that where the Word raises its banner, language and voice are both silent.

460. If the Word had not woven the thread of the soul, how could the soul have been strung on this thread?

(40) 461. They gain the empire of nature by speech ; they make the seal of the laws with speech.

462. The mine had our words and its own gold ; it took both to one who understands speech,

463. Saying : " Tell me, which is better, the new speech, or the old gold ? " He answered : " The new speech."

464. The messenger of speech travels on his head ; none succeeds as speech succeeds.

465. Strike the die on the silver of speech whose dust is coins. Gold is worthless ; it is the gazelle tied to the saddle strap of speech.

466. Speech holds a higher place than any man. The wealth of this empire belongs to speech alone.

467. None but the Heart understand the Word ; the explanation of the Word is beyond speech.

468. So long as the Word exists, may its fame continue ; may the name of Nezāmi be kept fresh by his words.

The superiority of poetry to prose

469. Since ordinary unrhymed speech is as a gem to the jewellers,

470. Remember this subtle point, see what a weighed subtlety would be when it is measured.

471. Poets who raise their voices, gain the treasure of both worlds by their poetry,

472. Especially as *The key of the treasury lies under the tongue of the poet.*

473. He who made the balance of speech, educated the fortunate ones by his words.

(41) 474. The poets are the nightingales of heaven; how do they resemble others?

475. When they are disturbed by the fire of thought, they are of the family of the angels.

476. Poetry, the curtain of mystery, is a shadow of the prophetic veil.

477. Two ranks stand before God; in front are the prophets, and the poets are behind.

478. These two visions gaze upon the same Friend. These two are the kernel; all others are the shell.

479. Every date from this table is not speech; it is life itself;

480. It is a soul created by the clay beak, a thought ground in the mill of the heart.

481. Poetry, the fount of knowledge, is dishonoured by base poets for a mere loaf.

482. He who sings on this note, is in a better world than this.

483. The saint who conquers the world by meditation, will not lower his head at every threshold.

484. When he makes his knee-cap the feet of his heart, he embraces both worlds.

485. The crown of his head comes down to greet his feet; he brings his feet and head together in a circle.

486. In the curve of that circle, he is quickened; he destroys life and recreates it.

(42) 487. At times, from that circle of meditation, he pierces the ear of heaven with a thousand rings of servitude;

488. At other times, by means of this turquoise-coloured juggler's cup, he brings out ten beads where there is only one.

489. When the steed of his eloquence is heated by words, life itself comes out to kiss his lips.

490. To dig out the ruby from the mine, he penetrates the seven spheres of heaven.

491. He assigns the child, his flowing poetry, to his poetic talent, the father.

492. The curved heaven comes forth to serve him; he will be safe from the calamity of serving others.

493. His prayers will bring comfort to mankind; his words will be a seal on their tongues.

494. Whoso paints this picture, attach thyself to his words, because he is a poet.

495. I would call him the Jupiter of the magic word and deem him to be the Venus who caused the downfall of Hārut.

496. This baggage train which was captured by warrior knights, was debased by mean poets.

497. It has dazed my judgment to know that poets have dishonoured poetry.

498. How can the fruit of the heart, which is worth life itself, be like water to be exchanged for a loaf?

499. Oh heaven, since these knots which they have tied on their belts, are beyond the reach of thy hands,

500. The work is beyond thy reach; untie these knots in the cord of speech with thy toe.

(43) 501. The beggars who die for the love of gold, have destroyed the value of this silver for the sake of gold.

502. He who gave luminous coins for gold, exchanged lustrous pearls for stones,

503. Therefore these people who have more knowledge are humbler, though they are greater.

504. He who wore the gold-embroidered robe of the king, suffered in the end from the sword,

505. And he who, like quicksilver, did not desire gold, became silver and did not suffer from the sword of Sanjar.

506. Since thy poetry is as sweet as honey, do not cheapen it; do not let flies contaminate the sweetness of thy poetry.

507. Do not take even fidelity, unless it is given thee freely. Do not speak, even if it were to pray, unless they listen to thee.

508. Until thou art well versed in the Mohammadan law, beware, be not betrothed to poetry.

509. Poetry will seat thee on the Tree of Paradise; it will make thee ruler of the empire of the spirit.

510. Through the Mohammadan law thy poetry will reach a stage where the shadow of thy girdle will reach to the Gemini.

511. Poetry will give thee a princely name; for *Poets are the princes of words.*

512. Like heaven, thou shouldst not rest, until thy poetry is as high as heaven.

(44) 513. Humble thyself like the candle; die during the day and live during the night.

514. When the steed of thought gallops hotly, the swift heaven slackens its speed.

515. It is better to accept words slowly, so that thou mayest receive them from a sublime hand.

516. If thou dost not approve whatever is shown thee behind this veil, they will show thee a better thing.

517. If thou acquirest a pearl, do not wear it immediately; seek a better one than thou hast.

518. He who bore his standard on this road, carried off the ball from the sun and won the race from the moon.

519. Though his inspiration did not move quickly, he did not slacken his effort for one moment.

520. When his thought moved swiftly, he won the race from heaven; yet he was still unsatisfied.

521. The pinions of Gabriel were his steed; the wings of the angel Esrāfil were his fan.

522. Do not sacrifice to others this seed. Do not entrust this string to any man.

523. The fig tree would be bare, if every bird could eat figs.

524. I who am perfect in this art, am worthy to be seen, for I am true.

525. The temple of poetry was founded by me; the art of poetry was freed from the tavern.

(45) 526. The ascetic and the monks rushed towards me; they threw down their cloaks and belts.

527. I still am like a rose-bud; I still expect the north wind.

528. If I show the new poetry, my voice will be the trumpet call of the day of resurrection.

529. Everyone, young and old, is fascinated by the magic of my words.

530. My art has removed the patience of magic; my magic is the spell which deceives the angels.

531. My Babylon is Ganjeh which seduces Hārut; my Venus is my mind which lights the stars.

532. The Venus of this zone pertains to Libra; therefore it possesses spiritual speech.

533. Night is the food of my lawful magic; it has blotted out the recipe of Hārut.

534. The image of Nezāmi, my thought, lives by my lawful magic.

Describing the night and cognizing the heart

535. When the defeat of the sun caused the earth to throw its shield on the water,

(46) 536. The world was more exhausted than the sun and yellower than its shield.

537. When the sun threw down its shield, its army drew their swords meaning to slay it.

538. When the ox which is adorned with beads, falls, all draw their daggers.

539. When the child of night caught hold of its nurse, she tied the bell of the day onto its ankles.

540. To dispel its fear of the night, she prepared for it an elixir from the dust.

541. The dust became the breath of its Messiah and threw water on the fire of its melancholy.

542. The draught agreed with the patient, and the child left the house of fear.

543. The patient lost a bowlful of blood and became black as ink from head to foot.

544. The inner colour appeared externally. Providence said: "It was of the unbelievers."

545. Each moment, to charm the heart, the night played a different scene.

546. At times it adorned the garment of the moon with roses ; at other times it caused the harp of Venus to scatter silver coins.

(47) 547. I, on such a moonless night, was the nightingale of that paradise which was without a garden.

548. I mingled the blood of my heart with speech and lit a fire with the water of my heart.

549. When I held discourse with my own words in my solitude, I pondered on his counsel :

550. The Angel of solitude called to me, saying : " Borrow in such wise that thou mayest be able to repay.

551. " Why is there water in this thy pure fire ? Why is desire the slave of thy dust ?

552. " Entrust the feverish dust to the coffin ; expend the burning fire on rubies.

553. " Do not shoot arrows, because thy judgment is the target. Do not strike, for the horse is thine own foot.

554. " Sit no longer unheeding ; if thou hast water pour it out on the threshold of the Heart.

555. " In the curve of this lovely azure dome, sing the beautiful song of the Heart.

556. " Escape from the senses which are the robbers. The Heart knows thy road, know thou the Heart.

557. " These heavenly wayfarers who are free from the body, have fastened the pinions of the Archangel Gabriel to their Hearts,

558. " And he who has abandoned both worlds, receives nourishment by begging at the door of the Heart.

559. " If this material water and clay were the Heart, thou must needs admit that the ass also has a Heart.

(48) 560. "All creatures live in virtue of their life; live thou by thy Heart, that is true life."

561. "The eye and the ear are superfluous to the divine purpose; they are the ministers of the outward veil."

562. "Thine ear is filled with cotton like the calyx of the rose; thine eyes are the ulcers on the eye of thy reason."

563. "Oh thou, who brandest both the narcissus and the rose, why dost thou worship them?"

564. "The vigour of youth is fire enough for the eye which is the mirror of all unworthiness."

565. "When poetic talent is wedded to reason, one expects profit from forty years of life."

566. "At forty years, when he reaches maturity, the expenses of his journey are increased."

567. "Thou needest a friend now; do not recite spells; do not now learn the lesson of forty years."

568. "Stretch out thy hand and seek a remedy; seek a Heart sympathetic to these sorrows of the heart."

569. "Do not grieve, truly the Heart will console; if the Heart is thy friend, thou wilt conquer thy sorrow."

570. "The help of friends is a great solace to the wretched who is vanquished by grief."

571. "A hundred of his sorrows will vanish, when for a moment he is warmed by friendship."

572. "When the first dawn raises its banner, the next dawn challenges the stars."

573. "If the second dawn did not come to its aid, the first dawn would be humbled."

574. "Of thyself, thou canst do nothing; seek a friend, because nothing is better than a friend."

575. "Although not every country is Khār, seek a friend, because nothing is better than a friend."

(49) 576. "Everyone needs a friend, especially a helpful friend."

577. "These few friends that thou hast, are full of desire; they are less helpful than the knocker on the door."

578. "Hold fast to the saddle strap of the Heart; thy honour is to be the slave of the Heart."

579. "When the Lord of the heavenly Throne created the universe, he created the empires of form and soul."

580. "In a fitting order, he joined the form with the soul."

581. "From these two lovers, the Heart was born, a child who attained the Caliphate."

582. "The Heart to which the proclamation of kingship is read, is a union of the physical and the spiritual natures."

583. "The lustre of thy world comes from the Canopus of thy Heart. The form and the soul are both parasites on the Heart."

584. When the word of the Heart reached my brain, the oil of my brain fed the light of my lamp.

585. I listened intently in this company and made my soul the target of the angel of the soul.

586. I gained eloquence from this nourishment. I was full of happiness, and my sorrows vanished.

587. I wept cold tears, because the fire of my Heart had heated me.

588. I released my hands from those fetters. The robbers were impotent, and I was strong.

589. Galloping on that road. I travelled two stages,
until with one bound I reached the door of the Heart.

(50) 590. I went to the Heart, and my life nearly expired.
Half my life passed in that midnight.

591. At the door of my spiritual sanctuary, the polo-stick of my body bent into a ball.

592. My polo-stick carried off the ball. My head
bent to my feet.

593. My feet and my head were joined together. I
was a ball and appeared like a polo-stick.

594. I lost control of my affairs and became uncon-
scious of myself. I saw a hundred things as one, and
one thing as a hundred.

595. My fellow travellers were ignorant, and I was
a novice on the journey. My exile was more bitter than
my loneliness.

596. There was no way by which I could pass through
that door; I had no power to enter; neither could I
retreat.

597. Since I had lost my speech in that tunnel, Love,
the guide, held my reins.

598. I knocked at the door; he said : "Who comes
at this hour?" I replied : "If it would please thee to
give audience, it is a human being."

599. The leaders drew back the curtain and destroyed
the veil of form;

600. Therefore the noblest in the house called,
saying : "Enter Nezāmi."

601. I became the most favoured confidant of that
threshold. I was called on to enter, and I went still
further in.

602. I found a court brilliantly lit. May the evil
eye be turned from that scene.

603. There were seven rulers in one house, seven stories in one fable.

(51) 604. The empire was greater than that of the heavens. How rich is the dust of that land !

605. In the country of the breath of the warm breeze, the mid-day sun was seated on the throne.

606. A horseman, dressed in red, stood in reverence before him. One, dressed like a ruby, was his counsellor of victory.

607. A bitter youth was his advance guard in the chase ; below him was a black slave, drinking the dregs.

608. A lasso thrower sat in ambush ; an invulnerable one wore silver armour.

609. All these were the moths, and the Heart was the candle. They were all scattered, but the Heart was collected.

610. I became the contented guest of the Heart and gave my soul as an offering to the sovereign Heart.

611. When I found the banner of the army of the Heart, I turned away my face from the whole world.

612. The Heart said tenderly : " Oh thou speechless one, seek the bird and leave this nest.

613. " My fire does not confide in this smoke, because that is the salt, and this piece is not even salted.

614. " My shadow has more power than this cypress. My foot is above this stage.

(52) 615. " I am a treasure, but not in the purse of Aaron. I am not with thee ; neither am I outside thee."

616. Through the warm breath of the Heart, the bird of my lips shed the feathers of its tongue in shame.

617. I bowed my head in shame ; my ears wore the ring of servitude out of respect.

618. My master, the Heart, renewed my covenant
and made the name of Nezāmi resound in heaven.

619. As I saw no escape from discipline, I received
my training from that master.

THE FIRST SECLUSION

To nourish the heart

620. When my trainer began to break me in, he
freed me from the knots of the nine spheres of heaven.

621. Though the rope was full of knots, he did not
give up the struggle to untie them,

622. Until this affair reached a stage where the knots
in the rope were untied.

623. Briefly, the master who is in our prison, although
he is not God, yet he is our Lord.

624. He is my guide in both worlds; otherwise why
should he be anxious about my soul?

625. Though I have not often been in accord with
him, yet he will not withhold his affection from me.

(53) 626. That trainer tamed me, when he became a
slave to me who was untamed.

627. He was not defeated by such as me. He con-
sidered association with dust as a gain.

628. One day, from this Egypt which shelters Poti-
phar's wife, Joseph-like he came out of the well.

629. When the eyes of night closed in sleep, they lit
the eye of the lamp of dawn.

630. The dawn became a lamp, illuminating the sky;
the black cloak of night turned into the red border of
the day.

631. The master took a lamp, held my hand, and
led me to a garden.

632. He freed my skirt from the thorn of grief, when he filled my lap with roses.

633. I laughed like the lips of the tulip and tore my garment in a hundred places like the rose.

634. The tulip entrusted its own heart to my soul ; the rose girded my loins with its own belt.

635. At times I blushed all over like one drunk with wine ; at other times I blossomed out like a rose.

636. I hurried from rose to rose and from branch to branch to where the water was gushing forth,

637. Until the banner of love reached a place where a perfume of fidelity scented the air.

638. A subtle breeze with an eloquent tongue, like the breath of Messiah, made my heart live.

639. It cast down my litter and gave my steed to the wind.

(54) 640. It said to me : " Dismount and do not speak of thyself ; otherwise I will separate thee from thyself."

641. I, who was like a boat on that water, was calmed by that heavenly breeze.

642. The water was flowing, and I dismounted ; parched with thirst, I reached the bank of the river.

643. It was a spring brighter than the sun ; the Prophet Khezr had not seen it even in his dreams in heaven.

644. Its jasmine garden was a resting place ; its open narcissus would lull one to sleep.

645. It was on the circle of heaven ; the ambergris of the perfume of Paradise was its slave.

646. The rose had a place on the bosom of the jasmine ; the thorn trod on the skirt of the rose.

647. The gazelle and the fox had given musk to the rose and fur to the thorn in that meadow.

648. The parrot had shed its feathers on the grass because of that sweetly smelling rose.

649. The green herbs were as beautiful as the plumage of parrots. The gazelles were fattened by their sweetness.

650. The north wind blew through the bower of roses. The gazelles ate flowers from the branches of the herbs.

651. The variegated daisies were massed together and fanned the air with grey ambergris.

652. Its scene gave collyrium like the narcissus. Its vegetation was tiger lilies like emerald.

(55) 653. The jasmine and the rose robbed the caravan. The turtle dove and the nightingale sang together.

654. The day-lily with the tongue of Jesus showed the hand of Moses to the dawn.

655. The ring dove, crying in the dawn, made the heavens grey with its sighs.

656. The breeze was writing the story of the rose upon the leaves of the palm willow with a hand of hope.

657. At times the spring came to greet the meadow; at times the rose came in thanksgiving to the thorn.

658. The white jasmine had pitched its tent on the plain; the pennon on the tent pole reached to the Pleiades.

659. The tulip came to the fire temple of mystery and prayed like the Indian Magi.

660. The black tulip and the white jasmine were like the crow and the Canopus Star of Yaman.

661. The boat of the garden, with red and yellow banners, had windows of lapiz lazuli.

662. The water was smooth like ermine ; how beautiful is ermine with sable !

(56) 663. The branches were stirred by the light of heaven and scattered silver coins beneath the feet of the shadows.

664. The shadows spoke with their lips of sunshine. The pebbles were alive swimming in the water.

665. The white rose was blistered by the kisses of the hyacinth ; the lips of the rose were chafed by the eyelashes of the bud.

666. As the quiver of the dandelion was empty of arrows, sometimes it asked for a shield and sometimes for quarter.

667. The willow, struck by magic, trembled ; the tulip was the censer for its incense.

668. The meadow was so full of life that it wished to fly ; the jasmine was so delicate that it wished to drop.

669. The sugar cane had sprouted with sweet laughter ; the brown rose bush had come forth with red shoes.

670. The self-willed wild rose spoke by the breath of the wind.

671. The sky was greener than the leaf of the tangerine tree and had appeared at morning with an orange in its hand.

672. Since the sky had decorated its banner in that place, the meadow demanded its boat.

673. Every knot on the string of that green table-cloth was the life of the earth and the heart of the sky.

(57) 674. It seemed as though the star of good omen said to the earth in the morning : " Mayest thou be happy ",

675. Or that the sky had passed by and exchanged its emeralds for rubies.

676. The spring was brighter than the eyes of the celestial maidens, that it might dim the source of the light of the sun.

677. The verdure had made its ablutions at that spring, gave thanks for its purification, and arose.

678. The bird had inhaled the perfume of Solomon from the rose; therefore it sang the songs of David.

679. The claws of the partridge, stained with the blood of the pheasant, hung a chain around the bole of the cypress tree.

680. The law-givers of the garden ordained for the nightingale the death of the crow.

681. The secret of the heart of the owl whose body was the product of that land, was his own death sentence.

682. The north wind, with the help of radiant Canopus, tanned the rough leather of the earth to smoothness.

683. The tulip was breathless with the palpitation of its heart, because of the speed with which it had hastened.

684. The shadow of the beauty-loving box tree had laid its hand on the heart of the tulip.

(58) 685. The silvery fingers of the dawn-coloured jasmine had taken from the night the whole of its crescent moon.

686. The Joseph-like sun, roped with gold, dug the pit of the dimple of the jasmine.

687. The earth had put on a robe of yellow muslin like the Jews, because the water showed its white hand like Moses.

688. The earth had made a medicine of that water, and whatever it had swallowed it brought forth again.

689. The light of the dawn had found the arena free. The branches gave leave to the breeze to walk in the shade.

690. The shadows bit the lips of the sun, and the wind combed the tresses of the willow.

691. Shadow and sunshine danced on the banks of the stream through the banners of the branches.

692. The thorn became aloe-wood which was my object, and the fire of the rose was the censer for that incense.

693. The stalk of the rose was the pulpit of the nightingale, and the tendrils of the violet were the girdle of the rose.

694. The bird sang more sweetly than David; the rose scattered more nectar than Nezāmi.

The fruit of the first seclusion

(59) 695. The wind lifted the veil sideways. The master hastily returned to his love-making.

696. He saw one with scented breath and sweet laughter, who had given colour to the rose and sweetness to sugar.

697. The intrigues of that beauty, clothed in muslin, had burnt the harvest of the moon, as a fire burns reeds.

698. From her tresses she had woven armour to her waist. She was beautiful from head to foot.

699. Since to see her dazzled the eyes, whosó beheld her shed salt tears.

700. Since her savour had been mixed with sweetness, it destroyed the sweetness of the beauties.

701. The parrot of the garden was put to shame by her sweetness. Her chin had a ring like that on the head of the parrot.

702. Close to that beautiful orange-shaped chin, a silvery neck was formed on her breast.

703. Cherisher of drunkards like the rose of the garden, destroyer of repentance like the wine of a friend,

704. Her lips, like a Tabari, had in them the red wood of Tabarestān with which they crush the sugar cane.

705. She was a red rose fresher than sugar cane, a dry sugar candy full of rose water.

(60) 706. Her black mole which burnt the heart, was the ambergris pounded in the oyster shell of the dawn.

707. Yearning for that black mole, the full moon became a mole.

708. Her eyes burnt the heart more than the sun; her lips illuminated the night more than the moon.

709. Because of the baggage of the pilgrim hearts which surrounded her for miles, the road to her was as narrow as her mouth.

710. My heart was broken in my breast by that hard heart of hers which destroyed hearts.

711. She spoke with a sweet smile on her lips; her face pleaded, and her airs and graces were magical.

712. Like a casket of gems, she had closed her mouth and had left an opening only as large as a bead.

713. When love saw that casket and that bead, it performed wonders and spread the magician's carpet.

714. It loosened the burden of form from my girdle and freed my soul from the fetters of the body.

715. My burden became unbearable, because the water of life passed my lips.

(61) 716. Our magical reason saw a demon; it suffered iron chains to gain this silver.

717. The heart which was relieving its sorrows with joy, was closing the eyes of the sun with clay.

718. The companion which takes away grief, is grief itself. The remedy for one suffering from the after effects of wine is the wine itself.

719. Oh thou, whose brow is marked by my brand, and who art ignorant of my meadow and my garden,

720. The meadow was Heaven, and the vision its Splendour. The garden was the night and tears its water.

721. And she whose face was jealously veiled, was the mirror for the face of sincerity.

722. For a long time my head rested on my knees, until I understood this mystery.

723. I have made this journey on the road of certainty. Go thou on the road by which I have travelled.

724. Thou hast not the secret of this road, beware, leave Nezāmi's work to Nezāmi.

THE SECOND SECLUSION

On the revelry of the night

725. One night, the master, desiring the company of his own kind, spent a few moments with some of them.

726. He found a night as beautiful as the dawn, and everything desired was present :

727. An assembly more radiant than the beginning of spring, a joy more tranquil than providence.

728. Yearn thou for a glimpse of its radiance, describing Joseph and his shirt.

(62) 729. The guardian night had destroyed the watchman, and its sweetness was forbidden to flies.

730. The minstrels were wonderful in their melody, the veiled beauties wonderful in their fidelity.

731. The jar was in the hennaed hand of the beloved, pouring wine into crystal cups.

732. The candle of the heart was burning like the heart of a candle; the fire of the heart burnt like the heart of fire.

733. On the tray of the censer which illuminated the assembly, the aloe-wood made sugar, and the sugar consumed the aloe-wood.

734. The rose scattered sugar from rose-water, the candle gold from its wick.

735. To provide the delicious sweetmeats served with the wine, eyes and mouths poured sugar and almonds.

736. Sugar and almonds discoursed of subtleties; Venus and Mars wooed one another.

737. The promise had reached the ear; laughter begged for nourishment.

738. The beloved, like a leopard, sat on fox furs; the musk of the gazelle was a chain for the lion.

(63) 739. The beloved drew the lover to herself and trailed her skirt on the ground. In her dance, her hands scattered gems.

740. Like the cup-bearer, the candle had a bowl of wine in its hands; the bowl was stained with wine, and the moth was intoxicated.

741. Sleep, like the moth, had shed its wings; the candle had bowed its head in thanksgiving.

742. Chaste Venus was entirely absorbed in playing the right melody.

743. Minds robbed each other of sleep. Lamps borrowed lights from each other.

744. One could find among that company in one instant all that one would find in a whole lifetime.

745. Each moment the heart, the body, and the soul provided food for each other.

746. One would say that, from the room which they had prepared, they had thrown the garment of annihilation into non-existence.

747. The bird of joy tied the letter to its wing ; it broke the seven wings of the bird of the Pleiades.

748. The fire of the bird of dawn, roasting on the spit, cooled the heart of the beauties.

749. The bird of dawn was in a deeper sleep than one asleep in the early morning. The foot of heaven was tied tighter than the hand of the moon.

(64) 750. The knocker on the door was a barrier against strangers. The tresses of the fairies were the chains of the insane.

751. In the curve of that ring the heart of Jupiter was caught as though in a tight finger-ring.

752. The beauties, like fairies, had raided the hearts of the nobles.

753. They had planted jasmine on the road of the heart ; they had collected the thorns with the tips of their eye-lashes.

754. The sugar cane of their cheeks was the fruit of the heart ; their tall stature was the rose tree of life.

755. The sugared hazel-nuts and the small almonds had lines like carmine-coloured pistachio-nuts.

756. The magic coquetry and the black mole had wrought a lawful spell by the black eyebrows.

757. The world was constantly bewitched and enslaved by such coquetry and such a beauty spot.

758. After the eyes saw those beautiful visions, the heart went on pilgrimage to the eyes.

759. The tongues of airs and graces were sharper than thorns ; the tresses were more entangled than my affairs.

760. When the hand of coquetry held the bow, it hit the mark without shooting the arrow.

761. The spirit of Messiah blew from the breath of the heart, and the water of life poured out from the mouth of the clay.

762. The rose, like the jasmine, contained ambergris; the moon, like heaven, carried a saddle-cloth on its shoulders.

763. When the cheeks and the lips of the beloved poured out sugar and almond, the rose fled to get help from the sugar.

(65) 764. Each vision was the life of a world; every eyelash was the temple of the idol of the soul.

765. The black tresses on the white silver scattered musk upon the leaves of the palm willow.

766. Her silvery neck which had a line as clear as water, became a rainbow in the shining sun.

767. The tresses were Abraham, and the face was his fire; the eyes were Ishmail and the eyelashes his dagger.

768. From these the fire had become a bunch of sweet herbs, and from those the dagger a heart-ravishing narcissus.

769. Like wine, the kisses produced intoxication; like Messiah, the lips gave the breath of life.

770. The perspiration on her cheek was like dew on red and white roses. The harvest of the moon was like the cluster of the Pleiades.

771. The button of the collar of the celestial maiden was loosened; it was as though the line of night had received the decree of the light.

772. The spirit of the high and the heart of the lowly were, by that light, maddened like those in delirium.

773. Her airs and graces were the herald, as her mouth was tired; her eyes spoke, as her tongue was speechless.

774. Wine, like the rose, was the ornament of the empire; the bowl, like the narcissus, was gold in silver.

775. In that circle reason was intoxicated, and in the end it lost patience.

(66) 776. Since laughter had not left room in the mouth, endurance was unable to sigh.

777. Patience had exhausted its melody on that note; the rebellion of the mind had a high note.

778. The rebellion found in the songs of David the story of Mahmud and the tale of Ayāz.

779. The poetry of Nezāmi scatters sugar and is perpetually on the lips of the beautiful singers of odes.

The fruit of the second seclusion

780. Life spent on that carpet, woven in eternity, is spent profitably.

781. The ear congratulates it on that work, and the eyes read in it songs of adoration.

782. The laughter of its beauties saddens sweetness; sight takes collyrium from the eyes of the fair gazelles.

783. There my beloved, like the moon, dressed in muslin, has broken my heart like a reed.

784. The moon which had cast away the night, had on that night remained until daybreak.

785. When the arrows of her airs and graces flew swiftly, the soul came forward as her target, kissing the ground.

786. Her light filled the eyes of the candle with tears ; jealousy of her beauty ulcerated the eye of the lamp.

(67) 787. The heart accepted in good faith every oppression of her tyranny as a sign of blessing.

788. At times, she was the verdure and I the stream of water ; and at times, I was the bleacher and she the sun.

789. I have no knowledge of that fruit of which I partook on that night.

790. How could I have known that the new moon, whose girdle is light, would keep away from her lovers ?

791. She was in love with her own lover ; her desire was a hundred times greater than mine.

792. The heart in its desire says : " What harm could have come to our day, had it not burnt the veil of our night ,

793. " And had it made the night safe, that it might have endured to the day of resurrection ? "

794. I search everywhere for the light of that night which was like the sun, and do not find it even in my dreams.

795. I have had happiness only on that night ; I have had no happy night since it bade me farewell.

796. Since then I call upon God every night, praying that He may grant me that same vision.

797. That was a clear day, not a dark night. It was night, but the night of the Ascent to Heaven.

798. The moon, digging out rubies from the mine of heaven, dies every night of desire for that night.

799. The day, which is the sworn enemy of the night, yearns also for that same night.

(68) 800. I was carefree, when suddenly the sun, brandishing its sword, came in down the path of the dawn.

801. The fire of the sun caused water to flow from my eyes on to my body.

802. The clouds came to the garden playfully, cleansing the garments of the sun.

803. At this well-spring of the dawn, many vessels such as thou and I have been broken.

804. Heaven had gilt the pure silver of its stars with the golden leaves of the sun.

805. The sleeping Dawn awoke swiftly with a dagger in her hand, prepared to shed blood.

806. I threw down my shield on her battle-field and made my soul my shield against her dagger.

807. To kill me, Dawn sprang from the stream, killing the thirsty one and destroying the bridge.

808. A voice cried from my desolation, saying : " Oh Dawn, is this my punishment ?

809. " Formerly, when I had a companion, I had many candles to lighten my darkness.

810. " What did I gain from that night and that candle which departed from me ? They vanished as though they had never been there.

811. " Sting him who ate thy honey ; destroy him who humbled thee.

(69) 812. " Destroy the strong, because that is permissible ; to destroy the weak is easy."

813. When the Dawn saw my weeping, she shed tears of blood on the morn in sympathy.

814. The harvest of the day was burnt by my sorrow. The source of the sun was saddened by my sighing.

815. In spite of all my suffering, heaven gave me hope. The snake of the night gave me the bead of the sun.

816. I know not how I felt the effect of the light of the dawn, though I knew it.

817. He who found the road to this moving cradle, found more than the light of the dawn.

818. Oh thou, whose days of pleasure have shamefully blackened the face of thy nights,

819. I who have described this night, have described it from personal experience.

820. The night is the curtain of solitude; the candle is the jewel of vision.

821. The aloe-wood and the rose-water are the groans and the tears of the weary.

822. All the beauty of that seat of honour was the light of the Night of Power.

823. Who under this heaven is trusted with the secrets veiled by the curtain of solitude?

824. The dawn which has learnt to be like a moth, has never seen a more beautiful candle.

825. Strive to be burnt by that candle, so that, like Nezāmi, thou mayest reach the light.

THE FIRST DISCOURSE

On the creation of Adam

826. In the beginning, when the worship of love was not, there was no rumour of existence in non-existence.

(70) 827. One chosen, prepared in the secrecy of non-existence, entered into existence and opened its door.

828. He was the last-born child of the spirits and the first of the children of man.

829. He raised the banner to rule, and like the banner he fell and he rose again.

830. His pure quality is "He taught Adam." The honour of his dust is "He kneaded his clay."

831. His essence is both opaque and transparent. He is at the same time the touch-stone, the gold, and the money-changer.

832. He is the new idol who disturbed the angels, the only bearer of the new order, the mirror of the sons of the dust.

833. He is the bracelet on the arm of the soul; his arm carries the bracelet of the seven heavens.

834. He is rocked in the two cradles and is the essence of the two gems mixed together.

835. He bestows the robe of honour on the prisoners; he is the watchman and the cup-bearer of the angels.

836. He is honoured by being the beginning of creation; he broke the virginity of creation.

(71) 837. He was a tongue-tied child forty days old, yet teaching the sage forty years of age.

838. He came like a love letter beautifully written, like a rose tree from the garden of Paradise.

839. A light from the all-seeing eyes, a bird from the highest tree of Paradise.

840. He throws grain to the birds of heaven, therefore all bow down before him,

841. And he, for the sake of one grain, generously threw down the garment and the glory

842. And was caught in the snare by a grain which was not worthy of acceptance;

843. Therefore prayers came into being, and the whole world bowed down to him.

844. At the door of the cynosure of all eyes, exception was made to the prostration of a rebel.

845. He scattered rose petals from the eight gardens on all, but brands on Satan.

846. He had no joy without thee and could not rest a moment in the garden of Eram.

847. He was not able to rule, because he was burdened with anxiety for thee.

848. The love of wheat burned his heart; it split his heart as wheat is split.

(72) 849. Through his newly created love of us, eating wheat became of small account to him.

850. He who like wheat had neither forefathers nor descendants, could not prosper without the earth and the grindstone.

851. Until he was thrown down, his desire was not realised, and he was not honoured until he was crushed.

852. His body was coloured like straw and was blistered like the starry sky.

853. Like barley and wheat, he was tested in the earth for thy sake, oh hypocrite.

854. Through eating that unworthy wheat, he was stripped like a grain of wheat.

855. All the humiliation which he suffered from the enemy was caused by his desire to partake of that wheat.

856. The wheat caused him great distress, and eating it was unwise.

857. When mankind began to eat wheat, the wheat opened its mouth wide.

858. Oh thou, who hast lost sight of the purpose of life, thy snare has been that grain of wheat.

859. Partake of barley bread and be patient; do not eat of the wheat which deceived Adam.

860. Thou art the secret voice of the Heart, do not follow Satan; thou art the lion of the prince, do not be the dog of the door-keeper.

861. It is impossible to wash the dirt from thy skin, unless thou repentest like Adam.

862. To ask pardon befits him who has done a wrong, because Adam prospered through repentance.

(73) 863. When Adam desired that grain, he was thrown out onto the field of the earth.

864. He saw that his desire of this grain was unprofitable, and that he was entangled in this snare.

865. He watered this withered rose and pitched his tent in Ceylon.

866. He fled there, shamed by this sin, and threw that black dust on to his head.

867. For a time, through the bad omen of the skies, he mourned in India.

868. When the blackness of sin was washed from his hands, the indigo plant grew at his feet.

869. He became white and beautiful like the moon; he hid the tresses of sin under his cap.

870. When through repentance his heart was purified, he became the ruler of the empire of this earth.

871. He planted the seed of fidelity in the land of justice and endowed us with the produce of that field.

872. He left in this room with six doors all that the treasurer of Paradise gave him.

873. Partake of this produce, because it is for thy benefit; he planted and thou must reap.

874. Aloe-wood is burnt by the fire in the censer.
The toil of the ass is for the ease of the saddle-maker.

875. When thy affairs were settled in thy absence,
they singled thee out for favours.

(74) 876. Float like a rose on the waves of spring, that
thou mayest not be anchored in the garden like a thorn.

877. Go on bravely when thou seest autumn, because
timidity burns the soul.

878. Thou hast the appearance of a lion, but thou
art not lion-hearted. Although thou hast a heart, thou
hast no courage.

879. One can paint a lion on a wall, but a hundred
blows will not move it from its place.

880. The heavenly robe does not befit thee ; thou art
dust and nothing but dust befits thee.

881. The good fortune of thy affair declines ; thy
heart is small and thy sorrows great ;

882. Otherwise, why should the high heaven imprison
in a city a conqueror like thee.

883. Gird up thy loins like the circle. Thou art in
the circle of heaven, treat heaven gently.

884. It is the nature of fire to travel swiftly ; it is
good not to lag behind in the race.

885. Be like water and run swiftly, because running
water is precious.

886. Those who are slim possess the gem of the body ;
the soul is valuable, because it is ethereal.

(75) 887. A light breeze is like a soul in its movement ;
thou art heavier than the mountain of Qāf.

888. If thou art not deceived by colour like a thorn,
do not admire thyself like a violet.

889. The house is polished, and thy face is everywhere; therefore thine eye looks at thyself.

890. Although thou art reflected on every side, yet thou art none of those reflections.

891. Thou art thine own lover and a worshipper of form; therefore thou hast a mirror in thy hand like the heavens.

892. If thou shouldst taste a particle of thine own flavour, thou wouldst withdraw from this tastelessness.

893. Renounce tyranny, take refuge in fidelity. What is mankind? Take refuge in God.

894. Look at His goodness and follow His example; confess thine own sin.

895. When thou prayest in shame, His bounty will be thy merciful helper.

The story of the king who despaired, and of how he was forgiven

896. A just ruler saw a tyrant in a dream.

897. He said to him: "How did God treat thee, the tyrant, on the night of thy death on account of thy tyranny?"

898. He answered: "When my life ended, I looked upon all creation

899. "To see from whom I could expect guidance, or upon whom God had looked with favour.

900. "No man had any care for me in his heart; none had any thought of helping me.

(76) 901. "I trembled like the willow; my face was covered with shame, and my heart was filled with despair.

902. "I gave up all my hopes and relied upon the forgiveness of God,

903. "Saying : 'O Thou, before whom I am humbled and ashamed, forgive the wretched and pass on.'

904. "'Although I have disobeyed Thy command, do not reject me, since I am rejected by all men.'

905. "'Either punish me by fire, or do the contrary to what all others do.'

906. "When the Friend saw me shamed before Him, the Friend of the friendless aided me."

907. "My words moved the grace of His generosity ; He cast off my burden and raised me up."

908. Every remorseful breath drawn is a safeguard against the tumult of the day of resurrection.

909. Oh thou, who weighest the wind, all thy words are but a measure of loss and scales for toil.

910. Suppose that thou hadst had this measure of loss for years and for months, and that thou hadst lived through these months and these years,

911. Thy scales are without weights and pearls ; thy measure is empty, and thy span of life is full.

912. Do not make the weight of the earth the stone in thy scales ; do not make an amulet of the bead of clay.

913. That to which thou art a slave, is but a silver coin ; that by which thou art alive, is but a breath.

914. Give back that which thou takest from behind this veil ; do not take it thyself, give what thou canst,

915. Until that day when it will be well for thee to have thy neck free and thy mouth empty.

(77) 916. The debts of orphans will not weigh thee down, and the burden of widows will not be on thy shoulder.

917. Leave this old worn-out carpet ; cast away this stained garment.

918. Either take thy provision for the road like a stranger, or abandon the world like Nezāmi.

SECOND DISCOURSE

On advising the king to uphold justice

919. Oh thou, whose judgment is the ruler of all who have life; oh thou, whose foot is the jewel of crowned kings,

920. If thou art a king, seek a royal palace; if thou art a gem, seek the divine crown.

921. From the world beyond which there is no road, and of which only thou and I have knowledge,

922. Thou hast been regarded with the greatest favour by that Light which is cherished in eternity.

923. Thou art a rare coin, and thy city is the world. All the currency of the world is thine, coin by coin.

924. The empire with its affairs and authority is thine; be proud, this happiness is thine.

925. Thy circle is wider than the circle of heaven; thou art worth more than both worlds.

926. The dawn holds the mirror, only that thou mayest see thine own face.

927. The motion of this cradle which is thy temple, is but to lull thee to a sweet sleep like a child.

928. Thou art both the bird of the heart and the breath of life. If there is any like thee, it is thyself.

(78) 929. The heart of the sun, which is full of fire, is happy, because it sees thy face.

930. The moon, which wanes to the fineness of thy hair, laughs when she sees thy face.

931. Enjoy the world, because thou art greater than all. Do not grieve; thou art not the slave of the world.

932. Be humble to all like the dust of the earth ; be free of all like the wind.

933. Earth is better alone by itself ; wind-blown earth becomes dust.

934. Give thy heart to God and be happy ; this is a further kingdom for thee.

935. Say : "Where is the knowledge of religion and piety ? Where are we, and where is trust ?"

936. News of the other side of the world is given to the heart which has received the mark of religion.

937. Strive for religion, because thou hast the world, that thou mayest possess thyself of the other world also.

938. Since religion cannot be bought with the things of this world, one should not listen to the orders and prohibitions of the devil.

939. Every barleycorn weight of the essence of this amber is worth a stone of alchemy.

940. Throw away the stone and take the jewel ; give the dust of the earth and take the gold.

941. He who gives thee the provision for the road, takes one portion from thee and gives thee ten in exchange.

942. There is no better investment than this ; take thy profit ; indeed thou canst not lose.

943. Thy work is appointed to foster religion ; just kings have acted in this way.

944. To administer justice is right thinking. To be free from these people is the best calling.

(79) 945. If thou art the benefactor of the city and the army, the whole city and army will wish thee well.

946. Tyranny destroys the empire. The empire endures by kindness to its subjects.

947. There is a reckoning; come, and before that end observe thine own works and take warning.

948. Seek peace for the people; why injure them? What can be the result of injustice but shame?

949. Reason is in a deep sleep of intoxication; the ship of prudence is in a whirlpool.

950. Suppose that thou hast possessed thyself of the belongings of the weak; suppose that thou hast tyrannously seized the goods of the orphans,

951. On the day of resurrection which is the day of judgment, wilt thou not be ashamed of thy excuses?

952. Turn thy face to religion, because it is a strong support; turn thy back to the sun, because it is worshiping fire.

953. This game of the golden ball is fatal like arsenic. Do not pursue games like a sick woman.

954. Everything in this tent with nine pegs is the sport of this fatal game.

955. Blow it out from thy mind as with the breath of the Messiah. Free thine own oil from this lamp.

956. How much longer, like a moth, wilt thou shed thy wings and throw thy shield down before a lamp?

957. Tear this fourth curtain, so that the wings of Jesus may grow from thy feet.

958. He who, like Jesus, gave up his life, truly conquered the world.

(80) 959. One cannot conquer the world by tyranny; one can gain empire by justice.

960. What portion will injustice give to thee? Injustice gives thee to destruction.

961. Justice is a messenger of good tidings, gladdening wisdom. It is an agent which brings prosperity to the country.

962. The empire endures through justice. Thy rule will be confirmed by thy justice.

The story of Nushirvān and his visier

963. Whilst hunting, the horse of Nushirvān carried him far away from the royal retinue.

964. The only companion of the king was his minister ; the king and the minister were alone together.

965. In that hunting ground the king saw a village, ruined like the heart of an enemy.

966. Two birds were sitting close together ; their discussion was closer than the heart of the king.

967. He said to the minister : " What is their argument ? What is the meaning of their cries to one another ? "

968. The minister said : " Oh, the king of the world, I will explain it, if the king would take a lesson.

969. " These two voices are not mere singing ; they are the proclamation of a marriage ceremony.

970. " This bird has given a daughter in marriage to that other bird and demands from him that the price of mother's milk be settled in the morning,

971. " Saying : ' Leave this ruined village to us together with a few more like it.'

(81) 972. " The other one answers, saying : ' Do not worry about this. See the tyranny of the king and do not grieve.

973. " ' If we have this same king and this destiny, in a short time I will give thee a hundred thousand ruined villages like this.' "

974. These words had such an effect on the king, that he heaved a sigh and began to lament.

975. He tore his hair and wept grievously. What can be the result of injustice but tears?

976. He gnawed his finger at this oppression. He said : " Look at the oppression which is known even to the birds.

977. " See my tyranny which leaves owls for the farmers instead of hens.

978. " Oh, how negligent and worldly I have been ! For this tyranny I shall have to suffer much regret.

979. " How long shall I take the property of the people by force ? I am unmindful of death and the grave of to-morrow.

980. " How long shall I usurp ? See how I am playing with my life.

981. " God gave me the empire, that I may not do that which is unworthy.

982. " My base metal is covered with gold ; yet I do what is prohibited.

983. " Why should I spoil my good name by oppression ? I oppress others, alas ! I oppress myself.

984. " May there be a truer justice in my heart. Let me be ashamed either before God or before myself.

985. " To-day I am the embodiment of oppression. Alas for the exposure of my to-morrow !

986. " My unproductive body is fuel. For this grief my heart burns for my heart.

987. "How long shall I raise the dust of injustice,
spill my own glory and the blood of others?"
- (82) 988. "On the day of resurrection, they will call me
in question for this spoilation."
989. "I am shameless, if I am not humbled now.
My heart is of stone, if I do not grieve now."
990. "See how long I will suffer reproach, that I
may bear this shame till the day of resurrection."
991. "That which bears me is, in truth, my burden.
That which is my remedy is, indeed, my poison."
992. "Of these countless jewels and treasures, what
did Sām take, and what did Feridun carry away?"
993. "And of this power and empire which is mine,
what in the end shall I possess?"
994. The king became so heated over this matter,
that the shoe of his horse melted from his haste.
995. When he reached his camp and royal standard,
the hope of kindness spread over the country.
996. Immediately, he remitted the taxes on the over-
taxed land. He abolished bad customs and the ways of
injustice.
997. He spread justice and destroyed tyranny, and to
his last breath he remained faithful to this.
998. He has gone, and after many turns of the wheel
of fortune, the fame of his justice remains.
999. In the empire of the spiritually-minded, the die
of his name bore the impress of justice.
1000. He found a fortunate ending. He who knocked
at the door of justice found this name.
1001. Pass thy life in making hearts happy, that God
may be pleased with thee.

1002. Seek the protection of the angels. Seek thine own toil and the comfort of thy friends.

(83) 1003. Take away pain and give remedies, that thou mayest reach kingship.

1004. Be warm in love and cold in revenge. Be generous like the moon and the sun.

1005. The good that he did returned to him who began a good work.

1006. As an analogy, the revolving dome knows what is due to good and to evil.

1007. Devote thyself to prayer; turn thy face from sin, that thou mayest not make excuses like sinners.

1008. Since life in this world is but an hour, spend that hour in devotion, because devotion is better than all.

1009. Do not make excuses; they do not ask for wiles. These are only words; they demand actions from thee.

1010. If matters could be simplified by words, the affairs of Nezāmi would reach heaven.

THIRD DISCOURSE

On the changing world

1011. For a moment, oh master who art garbed in trailing robes, throw away the whole world.

1012. Do not injure, be the comfort of the afflicted. For an hour, leave thy greatness behind.

1013. Since the order is to think of the future, power is the slave of poverty.

1014. Do not ask where is the empire of Solomon. The empire remains, but where is Solomon?

1015. The bridal chamber is the same which Azrā erected. The banquet is the same at which Vāmeq sat.

1016. That bridal chamber and that banquet are now departed. Vāmeq has fallen and Asrā has departed.

1017. Although the world has existed for many years, it has not changed by a hair's breadth.

1018. The earth is the same powerful enemy. Heaven is the same fatal tyrant.

(84) 1019. Who will desire to associate with the world? To whom has it been faithful, that it should keep faith with us?

1020. He who lived on this earth, became dust. What does the dust know of who is in this dust?

1021. Every rose petal is the cheek of a noble. Every step treads on the head of a prince.

1022. Why are we old, who have given back our youth to the world? Because we are born of the world.

1023. Sām, who had a Phœnix to care for his son, was young, though he had an old son.

1024. The moving dome which is not permanent, desires nothing but what is contrary to thy wishes.

1025. At times it makes thee the king of the living; at times it makes thee into the potter's clay.

1026. Upon this party-coloured carpet, everyone is in despair.

1027. Those who live in the desert, say : " How happy those who live in the sea."

1028. And he who suffers hardship in the sea, weaves spells for the pleasures of the desert.

1029. Humanity is not immune from change; it has security for naught.

1030. It is necessary to go with this caravan, to leave this litter, and to pass on.

1031. He who remains behind in this circle, is driven out of the city and the village.

1032. The traveller, having a respite, is shown from far off in non-existence.

(85) 1033. Give up empire, because it makes thee proud. What light will the darkness of this shadow give thee?

1034. Thou art spending thy life in play ; thou art playing to excess.

1035. The revolution of this playful-seeming sphere did not allow thee time for play.

1036. Before reason matured, negligence was pleasant ; how beautiful it was !

1037. When the vision of reason reached its limit, the empire of happiness came to an end.

1038. It is not wise to be negligent ; negligence is part of insanity.

1039. Do not sit heedlessly, scribble a few pages ; if thou dost not write, sharpen thy pen.

1040. Do not turn from association with the spiritually minded ; do not take thy hand from the belt of the saints.

1041. The thorn which is the associate of the rose, pours ambergris into the lap of the hyacinth.

1042. On the day of judgment, when they present the book of our account, they will bring the desert into the arena,

1043. Saying to it : " Oh thou, who art mixed with the blood of the dumb animal, and oh thou, who hast drunk the heart's blood of the weary,

1044. " How could thy sands have the water of life ? Thou art the desert ; thou hast not the blessings of the Euphrates."

(86) 1045. The sand will lament, saying : " I have drunk blood. Do not stone me ; I have not committed a murder.

1046. " I provided salt for a table ; I mixed with some hearts,

1047. " So that, when I embrace the saints, I shall become the intimate of the bracelet of the celestial maidens."

1048. When they pass judgment upon it, according to the decree of its nature, they will make it the minstrel wearing anklets in paradise.

1049. He who chooses good associates, will necessarily profit by it some day.

1050. Good associations have been removed from the world ; the honeycomb has become the wasp's nest.

1051. Look at the world and see how, because of inhumanity, mankind is on his guard against mankind.

1052. They have taken spiritual knowledge from mankind ; they have taken humanity away.

1053. Since the heavens revolt against the covenant of Solomon, he is human who is now invisible like a spirit.

1054. I deemed it advisable to run away from whomsoever I associated with.

1055. The shadow of no man had the glory of the Phoenix ; I found no trace of fidelity in the friendship of any man.

1056. What is the seed of culture? To sow fidelity. What are the rights of fidelity? To observe fidelity.

1057. To the farmer who sows the seed comes the day when he eats of it.

The story of Solomon and the farmer

1058. One day, when Solomon was at liberty, his breath blew out a candle.

(87) 1059. He transferred his court to the country. He set up his throne on this turquoise realm.

1060. He saw an old farmer in such a state on that arid plain, that his heart was broken.

1061. He had taken corn from his house and had cast it into the granary of divine generosity.

1062. He was sowing seed in all directions. An ear of corn grew from each of his grains.

1063. When he opened his bag of corn, he loosed the tongues of the birds of Solomon.

1064. One said : " Oh old man, be content, consume that which thou hast.

1065. " Thou art not a snare, do not scatter grain ; do not contend vainly with us.

1066. " Thou hast no spade, do not scratch the surface of the desert. Thou dost not find water, do not sow the seed of the farmer.

1067. " What harvest did we obtain, who cultivated a well irrigated land,

1068. " That thou shouldst produce anything in this parched waterless burning field ? "

(88) 1069. The old man said : " Do not take offence at the answer ; I am independent of the produce of earth and water.

1070. " Water and drought are no concern of mine. I sow the seed, but God helps the growth.

1071. " My water is the sweat of my body ; my spade the tips of my fingers.

1072. "I have no need for empire or lands. As long as I live, this is enough for me."

1073. "He who gives good tidings through me, gives me seven hundred grains for each grain that I sow."

1074. Do not sow grain in company with Satan, so that every seed may produce seven hundred grains.

1075. One must first sow good seed, that the ear of corn may ripen well.

1076. Every created form has been endowed with a garment fitted to his stature.

1077. Not every donkey can carry the garments of Christ. Not every one can be trusted with the secrets of the empire.

1078. A rhinoceros can eat the neck of an elephant; an ant cannot consume more than the leg of a locust.

1079. The sea is calm in spite of a hundred rivers; a spadeful makes the brook noisy.

1080. In this circle of lapis lazuli, the position of every man accords with his worth.

1081. It requires a fortunate patient man not to get tired of his burden.

1082. Not every soul is worthy of grace; not every womb is pregnant with divine secrets.

(89) 1083. I will not repeat it, because it shows inexperience: the work of Nezāmi is to carry a load.

FOURTH DISCOURSE

On the good behaviour of kings to their subjects

1084. Oh thou, who hast thrown down the shield of courage, thy refuge in alienation is thy demon.

1085. Thou art proud of an empire which has no permanence. Thou livest but with a transitory life.

1086. Thou art unprotected from the wine of the drunkards; thou art the plaything of the games of the stars.

1087. Thou hast cast away the book and the sword and hast exchanged them for the cup and the flagon.

1088. Thou hast taken in thy hand the mirror and the comb to admire thy tresses like a beautiful woman.

1089. See what Rābe'eh did to the dog of the seven men with her own tresses.

1090. Oh thou, by whom merit is shamed, be shamed by the virtue of a widow.

1091. How long wilt thou lay claim to courage? Boast less, boast less, because thou art less than a woman.

1092. Reason cannot dispense with virtue. No virtue is greater than justice.

1093. This water was refreshed but not in thy stream. The mole was beautiful, but not on thy cheek.

1094. Thou art not heaven, approve of good decrees. Fear high heaven greatly.

(90) 1095. One should display only pure gems; one can make a good profit on this capital.

1096. It brings misfortune to do injustice, to dis- honour oneself, and to shed the blood of others.

1097. Much has been claimed before now to bring together some great spirits.

1098. Do justice and fear the spirit of men. Fear the arrow of the complaints of the oppressed.

1099. Do not despise the spirit when it turns to God, because it has great results.

1100. See what the unclean spirits of those two men did to Mahmud's body ;

1101. Then see what the spirit of so many pure souls will do with thee on the day of judgment.

1102. The travellers who follow the angels, are not slower than the tortoise on the road of inspiration.

1103. Remove the sword of injustice from their path, that thou mayest not suffer their complaints by night.

1104. Justice is the condition of sovereignty. Behold the condition of the world which is injustice.

1105. He who did justice in this house for one night, adorned his house for the morrow.

The story of the old woman and Sultan Sanjar

(91) 1106. An old woman suffered injustice ; she laid hold on the skirt of Sanjar,

1107. Saying : " Oh king, I have seen little of thy justice, and all the year long I have suffered thy tyranny.

1108. " A drunken watchman came down my street and kicked me sorely.

1109. " I was innocent, but he forced me from my house and dragged me to the end of the street by my hair.

1110. " He abused me shamefully and placed the seal of oppression on the door of my house.

1111. " He said : ' Oh hunchback, who killed such a one at midnight in thy street ? '

1112. " He searched my house, saying : ' Where is the murderer ? ' Oh king, what humiliation could exceed this ?

1113. " When the watchman is intoxicated, a murder is committed. Why should he violently accuse an old woman ?

1114. "The drunkards consume the revenue of the country ; they carry off old women on false accusations.

1115. "He who has condoned this tyranny, has destroyed my honour and thy justice.

1116. "My wounded breast was smitten ; there is nothing left of me, body or soul.

1117. "Oh king, if thou dost not do me justice, it will be counted against thee on the day of judgment.

1118. "Thou art a judge, I see in thee no justice ; I cannot acquit thee of tyranny.

1119. "Strength and help come from kings. See what misery comes to us from thee.

(92) 1120. "It is not right to seize the goods of orphans. Cease from it ; this is not the usage of nobility.

1121. "Do not rob an old woman of her trifles ; be shamed by the grey hairs of an old woman.

1122. "Thou art a slave, and thou claimest sovereignty. Thou art not a king, when thou workest destruction.

1123. "The king who attends to the affairs of his kingdom, passes just judgment on his subjects,

1124. "So that they may all obey his commands and love him in their hearts and souls.

1125. "Thou hast turned the world upside down. In all thy life what good deeds hast thou really done ?

1126. "The rise of the Empire of the Turks was due to their love of justice.

1127. "Since thou fosterest injustice, thou art not a Turk, thou art a plundering slave.

1128. "The houses of the town-dwellers have been ruined by thee. The harvest of the villagers has been ravaged by thee.

1129. "Reckon with the coming of death. Protect thyself whilst thou canst.

1130. "Thy justice is the lamp illuminating thy night. The companion of thy to-morrow is to-day.

1131. "Give the old woman joy by thy words, and remember this word of an old woman.

1132. "Withdraw thy hand from the wretched, that the arrows of the sorrowful may not wound thee.

1133. "How long wilt thou shoot arrows in every direction? Thou knowest not the spiritual power of the poor.

1134. "Thou art a key to the conquest of the world. Thou wast not created for injustice.

(93) 1135. "Thou art a king to lessen tyranny, and if others wound, thou shouldst heal.

1136. "The relation of the poor to thee is that of the beloved to the lover. Thy relation to them should be to foster them.

1137. "Beg at the door of the saints and protect the poor."

1138. Sanjar who had won the empire of Khorāsān, suffered loss when he disregarded these words.

1139. Justice has vanished in our time; she has taken up her abode on the wings of the Phœnix.

1140. There is no respect under this blue dome; no honour remains on this suspended earth.

1141. Arise Nezāmi, thou exceedest all limits. Thou woundest the bleeding heart.

FIFTH DISCOURSE

On the description of old age

1142. How quickly the sweet day of life reached its evening. Dust and wind came together and fire and water.

1143. Morning has come, why art thou drunken with sleep? The sun has passed the top of the wall.

1144. Abandon this pursuit of conquest. Do not pretend to youth, old age is here.

1145. That heart which was wounded by grief, is dry; it has no longer its former savour.

(94) 1146. Reason is darkened, and judgment is destroyed; the hand is blistered, and the foot is weary.

1147. Earth desires to bestow favours upon thee; withdraw thy foot; it is the time of rest.

1148. In this purity and pollution, there is no better comfort than ease.

1149. The source of thy moonlight has grown cold. Thy cheeks which were fresh like tulips, are yellow.

1150. Black and white have fought with every part of thy body, from head to foot.

1151. Time which is thy night and day, teaches thee during thy youth.

1152. There were many younger than thee in the world who desired not to grow old.

1153. The wind of autumn carried away the petals of his rose; age came and carried off his youth.

1154. They have not found fault with youth. There is a saying: "Old age and a hundred faults."

1155. Even though the kingdom be the kingdom of Jamshid, white hair is the sign of despair.

1156. White hair brings the message of death ; the bent back brings greetings from death.

1157. Who possesses the empire of youth and beauty ?
It is not mine, oh Lord, tell me whose it is.

(95) 1158. Youth has passed in negligence. It is lamentable, lament therefore.

1159. If the lost beloved is a Joseph, the loss is grievous.

1160. Thou knowest not the value of youth ; thou wilt not know it, until thou art old.

1161. The young tree is the pride of the garden ; when it is old, the gardener cuts it down.

1162. Although youth is itself all fire, age is bitter, and youth is sweet.

1163. The new shoot bears the early rose ; the dry wood is for the fire.

1164. Black hair is the beauty of the head. The black stone is the touchstone for gold.

1165. The days of youth come to an end. Awake, night has passed, and morning has come, awake.

1166. When camphor subdued the fire of thy nature, it changed the nature of thy musk into that of camphor.

1167. When the weather is cold for a time, the black cloud brings the white snow.

1168. Bleaching and dyeing go together. The sun and the Messiah live in the same sphere.

1169. The quality of water is to bleach ; the function of the moon is to colour.

1170. This blue dome loves changing colour, therefore Jesus practised the dyer's art.

1171. Since the air has no colour, it has no weight.

(96) 1172. Do not be party-coloured like day and night ; do not have a white face and black cheeks.

1173. So long as thou seekest hypocrisy, thou bearest the brand of ignorance and darkness.

1174. On the mountain, the leopard is wounded through the duality of his colour.

1175. So long as, like the young trees, thou clothest thyself at times in silk and at times in rags,

1176. Through this contradictory nature thou hast an armour : in the summer thou hast a hundred warm garments, and in the winter thou art naked.

1177. Eat and drink that which thou canst obtain all the year round like the lion and the leopard.

1178. So long as thou hast a loaf of bread and a draught of water, do not stretch out thy hand to every bowl.

1179. If thou hast not enough bread to satisfy thy hunger, who can keep from thee water and herbs?

1180. It is better to eat grass, like the ass of Jesus, than to beg bread from others.

1181. The fire of the dust of the curve of this whirlwind will not give bread, unless it takes away man's honour.

1182. If in this tower of the imprisoned dead, the fire of the spiritually enlightened gave no heat,

1183. Why should a wolf be the Joseph of its soul? And why should the lion-hearted be the cat begging at its table?

(97) 1184. Do not grind the grain of thy heart like barley and wheat for the sake of a handful of false wheat.

1185. Make a relish, like water, of thine own breast for thy bread, and, like fire, roast the flesh of thine own heart.

1186. Eat dust rather than eat the bread of the miser. Thou art not dust, do not suffer the wound of the base.

1187. Pierce thy heart and hand with the thorn of toil. Do not seek comfort; put thy hand to work.

1188. It is good that thou shouldst work, so that thou mayest not beg from others.

The story of the old brickmaker

1189. Somewhere in Syria lived an old man who, like a fairy, shunned mankind.

1190. He wove his shirt of grass. He made bricks and earned a livelihood thus.

1191. When the warriors laid down their arms, they made those bricks their shield in the grave.

1192. He who had only those bricks to cover his grave, even though he were a sinner, was not punished.

1193. One day the old man was hard at work at this calling.

1194. By chance there came to him a handsome youth,

1195. Saying: "What humiliation and degradation is this? Brickmaking is work for an ass."

1196. "Arise, and do not strike thy sword upon the shield of the dust. They will not grudge thee a loaf of bread.

(98) 1197. "Throw this mould into the fire; make thy bricks with some other mould."

1198. "How long wilt thou painfully dig clods from the earth? Why dost thou spend thy time on clay and water?"

1199. "Remember that thou art aged ; leave the work of youth to the young."

1200. The old man said : "Do not be foolish ; do not interfere. Do not consider thyself important.

1201. "The aged make bricks ; captives carry loads.

1202. "I have put my hand to this profession of mine, that I might not one day have to stretch out my hand to thee.

1203. "I beg for treasure from none. I eat my daily bread through the work of mine own hands.

1204. "Do not trouble me for this my daily bread. If this is not so, may it be forbidden me."

1205. The young man went away weeping, because of the reproachful words of the old man.

1206. This old man was experienced, and his work was acceptable.

1207. How long, oh Nezāmi, wilt thou knock at the door of this world ? Arise, and knock at the door of religion, if thou wishest to knock.

SIXTH DISCOURSE

On the importance of creation

1208. There is an artist behind this curtain ; otherwise who could have shown these scenes on it ?

1209. Make the eye of thy heart familiar with this curtain to perceive that which comes from behind this veil.

1210. Behind this blue curtain, he has countless instruments.

1211. They have lit the gems of their eyes in reverence and have sewn them on the girdle of their heart's service.

(99) 1212. There is nothing on any point of this circle, which is not working on the line of its circumference.

1213. These steeds which are saddled, are chosen for us.

1214. Before the movement of this new creation, and before the new travellers and the old voices,

1215. Had we not built the foundation of love? Had we not been nourished by love?

1216. There are evil and good in both worlds; and they have tied both to thy saddle strap.

1217. There is no companion for the world like thee; the bird of the world has no better grain than thee.

1218. Leave this bird which is injurious to nature. Be above this bird like the Phœnix.

1219. The bird, thy Messiah, has wings beneath thee and is above thee.

(100) 1220. Either extricate its claws from the cage; or entrust thine own cage to it,

1221. That, when it carries the baggage to its destination, it may carry thee on its protecting wings.

1222. When thou passest beyond these spheres of dust, they cleanse thy tablet of thee.

1223. Thou wilt transcend alteration. Thou wilt be entrusted with the divine secret.

1224. Thou wilt walk with ease in step with the prophets; thou wilt be initiated into the divine temple.

1225. The two stages of the two worlds are but half a stage of one breath of the Heart.

1226. He who laid thy foundations on this clay, made the sanctuary of the soul in the temple of the Heart.

1227. Receive the picture of acceptance from the enlightened Heart ; expect naught from the black carpet of the body.

1228. The morning breeze draws collyrium to the eye of the narcissus. Alchemy dyes the garment in copper.

1229. What is the body ? It is a handful of clay. Only the Heart counts, because the Word is in the Heart.

1230. Be the slave of the Heart, that thou mayest be a king, the master of reason, and the ruler of the soul.

1231. If thou seekest a heart as soft as the fur of the fox, give thy body to hardship like musk.

1232. Oh thou, who hast no garment better than sack-cloth, authority comes not from silk and brocade.

(101) 1233. The beauty of the gazelle is in the roughness of its skin ; therefore it is chosen to carry messages of love.

1234. Musk remains in rough parchment and escapes from silk.

1235. If thou art sugar, be content with compression ; if thou art a pearl, be content with a hard shell.

1236. Sometimes be like a ruby dawn, ending the night ; sometimes, like the dawn, be the target of sighs.

1237. Endure the burden of distress in the pitch dark night ; the greater the distress, the greater the favour.

1238. Those faithful ones who reached their destination, reached it along the path of affliction.

1239. The gift of calamity is the happiness of the prophets, and that which gives thee happiness is calamity.

1240. The wound of calamity is the remedy of selfishness ; the bitterness of wine is the essence of its sweetness.

1241. The dragons are the guardians of treasures, and discomfort guards the treasure of ease.

1242. Be a cypress and be free from thy fetters. Be a candle and be happy in consuming thyself.

1243. Toil is the remedy of complaint, and beyond every toil there is rest.

1244. Providence will not bring trouble upon thee, unless it takes other troubles from thee.

1245. On the journey which leads to freedom, the guardian grief is the fore-runner of happiness.

The story of the dog, the hunter, and the fox

1246. There was a hunter who had wonderfully sharp sight. He travelled far and wide in the desert.

(102) 1247. He had such a courageous dog that, when it ran, it outpaced the sun.

1248. The rhinoceros went in terror of its strength; the wild ass, of its devouring teeth.

1249. On his travels, it was his companion and friend; it would work for him night and day.

1250. Love burnt in his heart for it; it was his guardian by night and provided his daily bread.

1251. That lion-dog was lost to the brave man; the man feared that the dog had been destroyed.

1252. He said: "In this perilous journey, the price of a dog's foot is a lion's head."

1253. Although this grief broke his heart, yet he bore it with patience.

1254. He was patient beyond bearing; each grain of his patience earned him a dram of profit.

(103) 1255. A fox came to him from a distance, mocking him, and said: "Do not be patient, oh impatient one;

1256. "I hear that swift runner is dead. May your life be long, though the dog has disappeared."

1257. "Last night when he left you to hunt, he ran swiftly and vanished."

1258. "This which the dog caught for thee to-day, must suffice thee for two months, oh brave man."

1259. "Arise and make roast meat of thy heart, eat the kernel and give the husk to the poor."

1260. "Formerly thou hadst rich food; now thou wilt no longer eat fat foxes."

1261. "Thou art now without the fat of our limbs; thy nature is free from our bile."

1262. "Thou art separated from him; what fidelity is this? Thou dost not grieve; what love is this?"

1263. The hunter said to the fox: "The night is still pregnant; this one day's grief is mine."

1264. "I rejoice that in this narrow house neither happiness nor sorrow will last."

1265. "All this mastery and servitude exist in this revolving sphere."

1266. "The stars and the heavens revolve; ease and toil will pass away."

1267. "I am happy that my heart is grieved, since grief is the cause of happiness."

1268. "My wolf suffered the fate of Joseph. I am not a wolf; I will not rend my garment."

1269. "If they have taken it from me, oh deceitful one, they will bring it back with a prey like thee."

(104) 1270. He was still speaking when dust arose, and the dog appeared through the veil of dust.

1271. It came and ran round and round him ; it caught hold of the fur of the fox with its teeth.

1272. The dog said : " Excuse me that I came late ; the fox knows that I came like a lion.

1273. " My return enhanced thy faith ; the helplessness of the fox is an assurance to thee."

1274. His affairs will end happily who is drawn by assurance to the divine purpose.

1275. Seek the path of assurance in everything ; nothing is more blessed than this stage of the road.

1276. The foot becomes the head on the path of assurance ; the stone becomes gold in the eye of assurance.

1277. If thy footsteps are firm in assurance, thou wilt get dust from the sea and moisture from fire.

1278. He who united assurance to trust, wrote on generosity : " God will give sustenance."

1279. He was no fly on another man's food ; he accepted whatever came to him.

1280. Thy sustenance will not be taken from thee ; do the work of God and be not anxious for thy daily bread.

1281. Go to His door, because He is better than they. Ask thy sustenance of Him, because He gives thy daily bread.

1282. No one of us who begged at that door, returned empty-handed.

1283. Those who have assurance, are a different race ; we are the feet, and they are the head.

1284. When they spread their prayer carpet on the water, they change the pure wine into honey.

1285. Since life is not assured to thee for a day, why shouldst thou lay in a provision for a hundred years ?

(105) 1286. When they created us, they apportioned our daily bread to us in eternity.

1287. Since they have sent thee thy daily bread from thence, thou consumest here only thy portion.

1288. Although many have striven in this world, whoever ate more than his portion?

1289. Strive to excel in faith, because this is thy covenant; sustenance and wealth are not increased by effort.

1290. It requires thy effort and God's grace to make thee more precious than the whole world.

1291. The effort of Nezāmi was not strenuous; divine favour prospered him.

SEVENTH DISCOURSE.

On the superiority of mankind over animals

1292. Oh thou, who on earth are beloved like the heaven, thy lovers are both earth and heaven.

1293. Thy work, since thou hadst knowledge, was greater than thou couldst imagine.

1294. At the beginning, thou didst not take milk but sugar from that nurse who brought thee up.

1295. Thou shouldst have greater beauty. What beauty is greater than this?

1296. Because of the brush which they used, they have made of thee a beautiful picture.

1297. They have tied the cord of life to thy heart, and they have girt thy waist with the jewel of the body.

(106) 1298. It is better for thee to be weak, because in this meadow a fat gazelle cannot keep pace with a lean one.

1299. The living creatures which are thy slaves, are the birds in thy snare.

1300. Since thou art a Phœnix, be the glory of the work ; eat little, say little, and harm none.

1301. Whatever thou mayest see in creation, is working in this workshop.

1302. The owl which is known as the bird of ill-omen, is the nightingale of the treasure of the ruin.

1303. Whatever exists on this curtain, is worthy of a body and has a value for its life.

1304. Though they have fewer gems from thy sea than thou, like thee they are the jewels of this world.

1305. When thou bringest into account the idea of less and more, expect to pay damage according to the injury.

1306. The good and the evil in this world are for thy use ; in good and in evil they hold up a mirror to thee.

1307. If thou shouldst give shoes, they will give thee a hat. If thou exposest the secrets of others, they will expose thy secrets as does the moon.

1308. Arise, do not, like the dawn, divulge the secrets of others, so that the keeper of thy secrets may be like the night.

1309. The veil of the bee is the petal of the rose, and thine is this lace curtain of heaven.

(107) 1310. How long wilt thou fly for food like a fly into this spider's web ?

1311. The veiled ones who own the world, hid thy secret behind the curtain.

1312. Thou didst come out from behind that curtain, therefore thy secrets were unveiled.

1313. Do not even bid farewell to the heart which is outside the veil ; lend no ear to that which is not behind the veil.

1314. The actor who is behind this curtain, did not tie this veil on thy head without reason.

1315. Do not hold to anything but this curtain. Do not play any melody except this tune.

1316. Listen to this melody and awake ; be entrusted with the mysteries behind the veil.

1317. Thou couldst make thy body purer than the soul, if thou wouldest imprison it for forty days.

1318. Man is honoured by imprisonment ; for this reason Joseph lay in prison.

1319. One cannot find the value of the heart and the dignity of the soul except by discipline.

1320. Entrust the silver of nature to discipline ; produce the gold of nature by discipline,

1321. So that through discipline thou mayest reach a state where thou wilt be drawn from humiliation to glory.

(108) 1322. When thou hast broken in the wild horse of nature, the coin of sincerity will be minted in thy name.

1323. When reason and nature become thy friends, the story of the ironsmith and the perfumer is true.

1324. One will blister thy face with heat, and one will perfume thee with the scent of ambergris.

1325. The baggage of nature holds no salvation. In the cage of the bird there is little life.

1326. That which is contrary to habit, is the leader of the caravan of happiness.

1327. To turn away from lust is sovereignty ; to abandon it altogether is prophetic power.

1328. If for an instant desire is under thy control, then bring the shoes, because paradise is thine.

1329. Jangle the bells of lust ; be the servant of faith, not the hireling of the devil.

1330. Fly for safety to the sanctuary of religion, that thou mayest be free of care on the day of resurrection.

1331. The perfume of the Prophet is the guardian of Bu Tāleb from the raging fire of hell.

1332. Truly, the benevolence of the blessed is the protecting armour of the saints.

The story of Feridun and the gazelle

1333. One day, Feridun went out sight-seeing with some of his friends.

1334. When he arrived at the hunting ground, he saw a little gazelle which attracted him.

(109) 1335. Its neck and its ears disarmed enmity ; its eyes and its buttocks interceded for it.

1336. Attracting the king's eye, it seemed as though it had sprung from the king's vision.

1337. The king was so much attracted to that quarry, that he was completely enslaved by it.

1338. In the pursuit, his horse became as hot as his heart ; he made the arch of his bow as soft as the belly of the gazelle.

1339. Notwithstanding his efforts, the arrow missed it ; even at that pace the horse did not reach its dust.

1340. Feridun said to his arrow : " Where is thy revengeful feather ? " and to his horse : " Where is thy swift gallop ? "

1341. " Ye are not this time what ye both were before ; ye are small compared with that little grass-eater."

1342. The arrow spoke : " Oh Lord, this poor wretch is the object of thy gaze.

1343. " It runs under the protection of thy armour ; who can strike upon thy armour with an arrow ?

1344. " It is not fitting that the object of the gaze of the great should be touched except by the hand of the minstrel."

1345. Seek the brand of the great, oh wise man, that thou mayest be great through their brand.

(110) 1346. Service is the attribute of humanity ; to serve is the glory of mankind.

1347. In the eyes of the spiritually minded, there is no service more acceptable than fidelity.

1348. Lay the hand of faithfulness on the girdle of fidelity ; strive not to break faith.

1349. The serpent guarding the treasure is not poor ; yet it is but a girdle from head to tail.

1350. Heaven is the crown of the head, because the whole of it is a girdle for service.

1351. Whoso holds the reins of virtue, is girt for the road of service.

1352. The candle which became the ruler of light, gained this lordship through the service of the bee.

1353. Arise, oh Nezāmi, because thou hast not girded thy loins. What effort hast thou made to serve ?

EIGHTH DISCOURSE

On creation

1354. Before the forerunners of existence had drunk water from the sea of munificence,

1355. There was no right or left hand on this kingdom. There was no dust on the road of this earth.

1356. The promise of delay had not come to its end. No manifestation had come out from behind the curtain.

1357. Night and day had no sign of humility ; the soul and the body were not combined for existence.

1358. The elements still struggled together ; the laws of balance were not yet manifest.

(111) 1359. The grace of generosity showed benevolence and let one drop fall from its sea.

1360. By that one drop, this blue heaven immediately began to revolve.

1361. They raised dust from the running water ; they produced thine essence from that accident.

1362. When thou arisest from this work-shop, it will be as dust arising from the road.

1363. How beautiful was that moment when thou wast not ; thy picture was unpainted, and thy soul existed without thee !

1364. The eye of heaven was free from this search ; the ear of the earth was free from these discussions.

1365. So long as thou didst not tread this road, existence was full of gratitude to non-existence.

1366. Night and day were free from the trouble of thy pregnancy. Vegetation was unfertile, and nature was mature.

1367. The garden of the world was not troubled by the thorn ; the earth did not suffer disturbing dust.

1368. The fortune of the Gemini who had girded their loins, was free from the opening of thy vein.

1369. When the moon was eclipsed, it was not disgraced in the earth by the beating of thy tray.

1370. Venus had not yet been dishonoured on this clay, and the pinions of the angel Hārut had not yet been shed in Babylon.

(112) 1371. Earth and heaven were without thee. Thou wast absent, but the care for thee existed.

1372. When the decree of the universe was renewed through thee, the turquoise dome resounded with thy fame.

1373. The star did not escape thy evil eye. The pageantry of the cradle of the stars was broken.

1374. The month and the year were without movement, until thou knewest their secret.

1375. The face of the world which was a clear mirror, was darkened by these breaths.

1376. Thou tookest the torch of dawn to the evening and didst call it false and true.

1377. May the dust of the earth be in the mouth of heaven, because it has girt its loins in thy service.

1378. In heaven they call thee the fruit of the soul. Listen, because these are spoken words.

1379. Alas, that thy crown is better than thy head, the covering better than the dog, the nosebag better than the ass.

(113) 1380. There was much boasting in this world, that the world is not worth to thee so much as a grain of barley on the dust of the road.

1381. Thou wouldest exchange a soul for a handful of dust ; thou givest a whole world for a particle of clay.

1382. Oh thou, by whom the face of the earth is troubled, it is better that like a treasure thy place should be under the earth.

1383. The oil of thy brain which is like quicksilver, is frozen by this world.

1384. So that it may not confine thee as in a hazel nut, abandon this world.

1385. Day and night are not ermine and sable ; this dappled stoat is really a dragon.

1386. Thou art not a cat ; do not stretch out thy hand. Do not dally with the worthless fickle woman.

1387. The lion has slavered on this road ; why dost thou bend down thy head to the water like a stag ?

1388. If heaven shows thee water, do not be deceived ; it is a mirage.

1389. Do not gallop swiftly, thinking thou hast seen the water of heaven. Drink the water of thy mouth, because what thou hast seen is only salt.

(114) 1390. Make a plan, that thou mayest not be thirsty. Be like tabāshir, which is obtained by burning the tabāshir canes.

1391. So long as thy Joseph was out of the pit, his gaze was on divine Egypt.

1392. Thou camest from the blue heaven with yellow cheeks, when thou didst fall into this pit.

1393. The vinegar of thy eyebrow was not a remedy for all thy bile and for thy yellow face.

1394. Since thy fat had grown for a hundred years, — how could it be cured by the vinegar of thy eyebrow, which is but ten years old ?

1395. Thou hast seen the blood of thy father on these seven battlefields. Do not dishonour thyself for these seven loaves.

1396. Thou art setting fire to thine own harvest; thou art striking blows at thine own fortune.

1397. Gallop and urge on thy steed, because the arena is thine. Give orders, because the command is thine.

1398. During these few days of life in which thou holdest the cup, eat well, sleep well, and rest well.

1399. Truly, it was an act of great tyranny to set thee free from that rope so lightly.

(115) 1400. Thy feet are fettered, and thy back is bent; yet thou art still frying in thine own fat;

1401. Therefore thou art here the fuel of the kitchen fire; on the day of resurrection thou wilt be the brushwood burnt in hell.

1402. Even supposing that this belly of thine is full of water and of bread, oh fool, thou wilt then be worth no more.

1403. If a man could lengthen his life through eating more, then he who eats most would live longest.

1404. Life is short, therefore it is precious. The value of life lies in its brevity.

1405. Eat little and see what great ease thou wilt have; eat much and see the great discomfort.

1406. What has thy reason to do with thy food? Only thy greed sets thee to this work.

1407. Thy greed is impatient to do mischief. Abandon this fool who deceives the intelligent.

1408. As opposed to thy greed, they have given thee reason, that thou mayest not eat what is not given thee.

1409. I fear that this work to which greed puts thee,
will turn thee to its own colour.

1410. Every good and every evil in this world receives
colour from the other.

The story of the fruitseller and the fox

1411. A fruitseller who lived in Yaman, had a small
fox to guard his goods.

1412. It kept good watch on the road and guarded the
warehouse of the greengrocer.

(116) 1413. A thief played many tricks, but none of his
arts availed here.

1414. To hurry matters he closed his eyes. He slept
and by sleeping induced the fox to sleep.

1415. When the fox saw that the wolf was asleep,
sleep overcame it, and it laid down its head.

1416. The thief saw in that sleep his opportunity to
take the purse; he came and plundered it.

1417. He who sleeps on this road, loses either his
head or his hat.

1418. Arise Nezāmi; it is not the time to sleep; it is
the time to say farewell to all.

NINTH DISCOURSE

On the abandonment of worldly dignities

1419. Oh thou, who art more precious than the night
of union, whose shadow is lighter than the dawn,

1420. How long wilt thou sit in sorrow like a shadow?
Arise, for a banner is better when it is raised.

1421. When kings intend to start on a journey, they
send their baggage on before them.

1422. If thou art a king, resolve to start on the road ; prepare for a better journey.

1423. Send thy baggage on before thee ; send on thy provision for to-morrow now.

1424. Because of the prudence of the bee, its hive is full of honey.

1425. The ants which manfully draw up in line, carry provisions for the morrow.

1426. The heedless man, unless he is blind, is not below that bee and this ant.

1427. He who wishes to enjoy worldly comfort, should lay in provision in summer for the winter.

(117) 1428. Except thee and me, all who obey this instinct, are dealers in jewels of an hour.

1429. No man's spirit thinks of the future ; no man's vision sees more than the moment.

1430. Our abode which is higher than the heavens, is the abode of foresight.

1431. No matter how and where I search, no one has greater foresight than we.

1432. Though the pleasures of the moment are sweeter than life, they are less sweet than the pleasures of foresight.

1433. We who know the secrets of the heart, are jewellers, though we are made of clay.

1434. We have a sign of what is to come, and we know the past.

1435. We have read carefully from this table of clay the minute subtleties of the lesson of the nine spheres.

1436. No one bears our brand ; we were the first fruits of this garden.

1437. On that day, when they sifted thy dust, they compounded it for the elixir of the heart.

1438. With great pain and trouble thy dust is mixed ; in the heart of this dust there are many treasures.

1439. Recognise the due value of this dust ; worship the dust, oh ungrateful one.

1440. From thy coming and going to this place, learn the road to thine own abode.

1441. What is the purpose of thy coming on this journey ? What is the wisdom of returning thence ?

(118) 1442. In the beginning, when this empire did not bear thy name, and this ruined village was not thine abode,

1443. Thou didst possess the glory of the angelic Phœnix ; thou flewest in the zenith of heaven.

1444. Though the power of the wing of thy love had no bounds, the eternal way, too, had no limit.

1445. Thou wast weary and camest to this earth ; thou threwest thy shadow onto this clay ;

1446. And again, when thou art tired of this prison, thou wilt tread on the skirt of the sun.

1447. Though thou mayest leave all behind thee, thou wilt still go forward.

1448. Thy work is only to progress ; thou wilt not settle on one line.

1449. In the time of generosity, thou art generous ; thou art new and old in existence.

1450. Leave this mother who kills her children ; heed what the father has said to thee.

1451. Look to thy father, oh simple minded man ; hold to his traditions and see what he did.

1452. One cannot expect ease and comfort, because it is not obtainable in this life.

1453. If one moment of life were according to one's heart's desires, one's wasted life could return again.

(119) 1454. Grieve and pass on. Art thou made from other clay? What reason hast thou for happiness?

1455. Be content, it is not to me or to thee that Providence said : "Be happy."

1456. We were created for toil and for profitless discourse.

1457. On my life! We do not deem the give and take of the world to be real.

1458. Why is thy face red like wine because of thy coming? Since all who come must depart.

1459. How long will there be this compulsory arrival and departure?

1460. It cannot be doubted that non-existence is nothingness; the doubt is in existence which is also nothingness.

1461. Do not fly swiftly, since thou camest slowly; do not go quickly, because thou camest with difficulty.

1462. A time will come when the trumpet will sound; they will stamp our die on a new coin.

1463. They will refresh the drooping rose; they will bring together that which was scattered.

1464. Oh thou, who art not ashamed of to-day, at least be ashamed of that other day.

(120) 1465. For all these troubles which lie before us, for this patience of our wounded hearts,

1466. Religion is our only remedy and the only steed for this desert.

1467. See the difficulties of the road and do not lag behind ; do not waver, oh enduring soul.

1468. Hold the mirror of effort up before thee ; look in it and protect thy face.

1469. Repent, and God will forgive ; do not enter submissive only to the divine power.

The story of the ascetic who broke his vow

1470. A religious man was attracted to evil ; he chose the street of the wine sellers.

1471. He put wine to his lips and wept bitterly, saying : " Oh wretch that I am, what is my remedy ? "

1472. " The bird of desire has rested in my heart, it made the beads of my rosary into a snare.

1473. " Mecca was the thief of my time ; my original home was the wine tavern.

1474. " My star was evil, and I suffered misfortune ; I was destined for the street of the wine-drinkers.

1475. " The eyes of modesty are hidden through my fault. Wine is drunk in the streets of the wine-sellers through my fault.

1476. " May the world be delivered from me, the forsaken one ; may my dust be far from my skirt.

1477. " If it were not fate, why should I be an idolater ? How could a pious man frequent taverns ? "

1478. Since he was looked on favourably by the spiritually minded, a youth who was in that circle, said :

1479. " Keep fate out of this affair ; to Providence a hundred thousand like thee are not worth a barley-corn.

1480. " Come to the door of repentance and wash away thy sin ; then speak in this way."

(121) 1481. When thou goest, they receive thee, forgiving thy sins ; otherwise they will come themselves and take thee captive.

1482. It is enough, give up grazing on the grass of the earth ; heaven should be thy green sugar-cane.

1483. That sleep may not overcome thee, avoid it. Make a little provision for the time of non-existence.

1484. It is unfitting that the eyes should weep blood for the same sleep in life and death.

1485. When religion saw thee in this deep sleep, she hid her face behind the veil.

1486. Arise Nezāmi, because the king has mounted. Why art thou fettered here at midnight?

TENTH DISCOURSE

On the appearance of the last day

1487. Oh heaven, how much longer wilt thou revolve so slowly ? Oh earth, how much longer wilt thou endure this tyranny contentedly ?

1488. After each night comes the dawn ; the end of every burden is to be unloaded.

1489. Fear is cast into the spheres of the earth.
“*The hour of the earthquake is a supreme thing.*”

1490. The madness of the raging earth broke the link of the chain of heaven.

1491. The wind broke up the distracted earth ; the mad earth will break the chain.

1492. With whom did the earth make a wager to loosen the girdle of heaven ?

(122) 1493. The night lost its colour and the dawn its perfume. Heaven ceased to be a polo-stick, and earth escaped from being a ball.

1494. The earth knocks at the door of the high heaven,
and the girded heaven lies in ambush.

1495. The cataclysm of heaven emerged from the
ambush and disintegrated the earth limb by limb.

1496. The old heaven will rend its robe and will break
the string of the clay bead.

1497. Heaven will come down and will unbend ; the
earth will go swinging up.

1498. Both heaven and earth will be freed from our
troubles ; our dust will be cleansed from both roads.

1499. The heavens will cease to work for thee ; the
earth will be immune from thy guile.

1500. The stars and the sky were ashamed. How
much longer should they worship a handful of dust?

1501. The round heaven is like a serpent ; in the end
the serpent will eat dust.

1502. Oh ye, who have grieved the earth, which of you
is outside this earth?

1503. Why is the dust in this vessel of grief ? Why
is the colour of its vessel the blue of mourning ?

1504. If ye cannot lie in ambush and throw out this
clay from this vessel,

1505. Wash your skirt clean seven times with the
water and dust of this smoking vessel.

1506. The robe of the stars was lifted from the
heavens ; the line of destruction was drawn on the world.

(123) 1507. A sudden disaster will fall upon the earth from
the swiftly revolving heaven.

1508. The signs which portend upheaval, are shown
by the agitation of the heavens.

1509. The head jerks when it is broken ; this jerk is in this world to-day.

1510. This black oyster is thine enemy ; its eyes are full of pearls, but its heart full of whales.

1511. This is not the pearl of the sea, and this is not the jewel of the mine of vision.

1512. He who saw it was saddened and lost his sight like a dragon looking at an emerald ;

1513. Therefore he has no eyesight ; he has a thousand eyes but no sight.

1514. Thou hast not chosen the road of non-existence, because thou hast seen it with the eyes of others.

1515. Use thine own feet ; one cannot walk with the feet of others.

1516. Even though Bahrām is lifted up as high as heaven by gold and power, his portion is the grave.

(124) 1517. One cannot close the door of this road ; one cannot raise the head above this roof.

1518. Remain in this prison which has its doors and shutters closed, as if thou wert stricken with typhus.

1519. How long wilt thou discuss and remember heaven ? May the humble dust be upon its proud head.

1520. Do not be grieved by the sky and its milky way ; do not consider the straw carrier worth a barley-corn.

1521. Soar above this revolving dome, that thou mayest be free from the circle of the narrow compass.

1522. Imagination which is the thinnest thread, has turned back ashamed from this narrow road.

1523. See the helplessness of shame-faced imagination ; look carefully at this narrow road.

1524. On this tight-rope do not cling to a hair ; otherwise come thou out like a hair from the dough.

1525. Since thou mayest obtain better profit than this, it would be unwise to stay here.

(125) 1526. Since this heap of dust is unfaithful, it is not wise to turn to it.

1527. Every crown is a sign of humiliation ; every belt is stained with a hundred slaveries.

1528. Every merit bears the ridicule of a city. In every sweetmeat is the sting of poison.

1529. The fire of dawn in this kitchen is half a spark from the flames of hell.

1530. The moon whose body is the candle of heaven, gets its oil from begging at the door of the sun.

1531. The cloud which gives life to that which is withered, is itself the humour of depression.

1532. The ship knows what great loss water, which is the ease of life, can bring.

1533. This world is a house full of faults ; thou dost not look at its defects.

1534. Thou art blind to thine own faults and hast become a mirror for the faults of others.

1535. Do not show faults like a mirror, that thou mayest not be dimmed by a breath.

1536. Either cast out merit by thine absence ; or break the mirror of thine own fault.

1537. Close thine eyes to the faults of others ; look at thine own picture and find the faults there.

1538. There is virtue and vice in everything ; do not look for faults, and thou wilt find merit.

1539. Can one not see at night by lamp light? Can one see the crow only in the light of the day?

(126) 1540. How can it be fitting to find fault with the feet of the peacock, when it has golden feathers?

1541. The crow whose body is all black, has white eyes; look and thou wilt see.

The story of Jesus

1542. The feet of Christ, walking on the earth, passed across a small market place.

1543. He saw a wolf dog which had fallen by the cross roads; its life had gone out of its body.

1544. A crowd like carrion-eating vultures was gazing at that carcass.

1545. One said: "The fear of this brings darkness to the mind, as breath blows out the lamp."

1546. Another said: "That is not all; it blinds the eyes and oppresses the heart."

1547. Everyone sang on this note and made cruel allusions to the carcass.

1548. When the turn of Jesus came to speak, he discarded faults and found virtue.

1549. He said: "The picture remaining of its body shows that pearls are not so white as its teeth."

1550. And the others, through fear and hope, whitened their teeth with that burnt oyster shell.

1551. Do not seek the faults of others and thine own merit; turn thine eyes down to thyself.

1552. On the day when thou takest the mirror into thine own hand, be modest; do not worship thyself.

1553. Do not adorn thyself like the spring, that time may not destroy thee.

1554. The garment of thy faults is woven very thin, therefore they have put thee behind nine curtains.

(127) 1555. What is in this ring which, if thou wilt look at it closely, is not a badge of servitude?

1556. If thou art not a dog, do not wear even the collar of the Pleiades. If thou art not an ass, do not carry even the load of the Messiah.

1557. What is heaven but an old widow? What is earth but a rotten fruit?

1558. The whole world from its beginning to its end, is not worth a grain of barley, because it is transient.

1559. Do not grieve for the world, oh master; arise, if thou grievest, pour out the wine of happiness for Nezāmi.

ELEVENTH DISCOURSE

On the Untrustworthiness of this World

1560. Arise and roll up the carpet of the heaven, because there is no fidelity on this chequered backgammon board.

1561. Do not seek the picture of thy heart's desire in its union. Do not expect fair play, when it doubles its throw.

1562. Why put one's foot in this sea? Why lay one's load on these waves?

1563. The falcon said to the duck: "The country is beautiful." It answered, saying: "Thank you, I am quite comfortable here."

1564. Oh thou, who art in this ship of sorrow, thy merchandise is the cause of thy destruction.

1565. Throw thy burden overboard, because it cumbers thee ; it will not give thee bread, unless it drowns thee.

1566. There is no treasure of safety in this dustbin ; there is no marrow of fidelity in this bone.

(128) 1567. This world gives thee no grain of favour ; dissolve thy partnership with it.

1568. The provision in this tent is but a dirty bowl and an empty table.

1569. Whoso looked at it, his mouth was sealed. Whoso spoke to it, his tongue was burnt.

1570. There is naught in this litter but the sound of many bells. There is naught in this bowl, but there are many flies.

1571. He who dipped his finger into this bowl, made of his skull the ring on his finger.

1572. It is not right that in this village there should be perpetually distracted thought and troubled sleep.

1573. Retreat into the house of non-existence ; leave this ruined village.

1574. Set the window of this house on fire. What gain is there in selling thy house to this old woman ?

1575. Why hast thou embraced this world ? Thou hast not brought it forth from thy womb.

1576. Draw thy pen across this world and live in happiness. Remove thyself and live peacefully far from it.

1577. Thy road is long and thy halting place far away ; prepare baggage and provision for thy journey,

(129) 1578. Especially in this desert, full of demons, a hell which kills the heated and devours the thirsty.

1579. The blood of the heart is the spring of its water of life ; the sun is its salt.

1580. Its salt is the wine of the saltless ; the evil eyes yearn for it.

1581. There is no water, and through this salt which looks like water, the courage of the heart is destroyed, and the heart of courage bleeds.

1582. What will be the portion of the caravan of the senses on a road, at whose sight the heart bleeds ?

1583. In the heart of this desert, haunted by demons, the house of the heart is small, and the grief of the heart is great.

1584. He who was content in this wilderness of the world's desires, was saddened like the heart and burst like the gall bladder.

1585. What use is there in this clay from hell ? Arise and exchange hell for paradise.

1586. To reduce this earthly form to dust, fate will tread thee down continually.

1587. In the end, as is its wont, it will pass thee from hand to hand, until thou art lost.

1588. Since we must return to the dust, why pass over this earth ?

1589. Do not trample anyone under thy foot, because fate has trampled many such as thee under its feet.

(130) 1590. None has lived in this world for ever ; none has possessed this decree of eternal life.

1591. Do not tread on this thorn ; arise, protect thyself from this thorn.

1592. That impermanent abode of thine is a place of fear ; why remain in a place of fear ?

1593. This world is transitory, do not deem it eternal ; it is an autumn wind, do not think it the breeze of spring.

The story of the spiritually minded magian priest

1594. A Magian from the empire of India walked to a flower garden.

1595. He saw a resort like a beautiful picture ; he found a kingdom decorated with unreality.

1596. The rose bud, like heaven, had girt its loins for bloodshed ; the short-lived tulip was unaware of itself.

1597. In the meadow grew flowers of many colours. Much wine had been mixed with sugar.

1598. The rose, like a shield, was wounded by its own arrow ; the willow tree trembled for fear of its own life.

1599. The tresses of the violet were the chain on its own neck ; the eyes of the narcissus were the silver coins in its lap.

1600. The tulip had ground gems and the rose turquoises, the tulip which lasts for one breath and the rose for one day.

1601. Their respite was not for more than an instant ; yet none thought of the future.

1602. The sage passed through that beautiful garden, and after some months he again passed that way..

1603. Instead of those roses and nightingales which he had seen in the garden, he heard only the cries of kites and crows.

(131) 1604. Hell had displaced paradise ; the Cæsar of that palace had removed to a hovel.

1605. The verdure had rotted ; the bouquets of roses had become heaps of thorns.

1606. The sage contemplated that scene intently ; he laughed at all and wept for himself.

1607. He said : " Though it has a time of outward appearance, nothing is meant to be permanent.

1608. " The end of all things, produced by dust and water, is destruction.

1609. " There is no better street than the street of destruction ; there is no other way for me than the way of destruction."

1610. When the vision of grace increased his sight, he knew himself and knew God.

1611. He became the jeweller of the gem of that secret, until at his death he returned to essence.

1612. Oh thou, who art a Mosalmān and not yet as good as a Magian, thou art a spring and hast not a drop of water.

1613. Be not less than that Magian of India ; abandon the world and say to it : " Be not."

1614. How long wilt thou hold up thy head impertinently like the rose and pride thyself on thy crown and thy belt ?

1615. Rise and unloose the belt of clay, because the world has girt its loins for thy blood.

1616. The crown and the belt are the calamities of love, pledge them both to the tavern of love.

1617. Sometimes thy crown makes thee the master of the earth ; sometimes thy belt gives thee the servitude of the heart.

1618. Strive to free thyself from this duality of master and servant ; or, like Nezāmi, free thyself from thyself.

TWELFTH DISCOURSE

On the farewell to the earthly abode

(132) 1619. Rise and say farewell to the world; release thy skirt from this snare.

1620. Prepare a better kingdom than this; open a better shop than this.

1621. When thy heart and eye finish their journey, they should groan and shed tears,

1622. So that, by moistening this clay, thou mayest boast of mastery over thine own heart.

1623. If thou art a camel, dance on the journey; otherwise do not throw wine-skins under the feet of elephants.

1624. Since thou hast none whom thou canst trust, only non-existence can be thy confidant.

1625. The boon companions and friends have gone on; with whom art thou sitting, since thy friends have gone?

1626. Although thy poetic talent may attract thee with subtle imagery, how can it alone be a companion to thee?

1627. It is better that a pious heart should seek the light of purity in this black dust.

1628. Before the stage of disruption is reached on the road, discard thy possessions.

1629. Cast away thy baggage, because thou movest slowly, so that, having a light burden, thou mayest quickly reach thy destination.

(133) 1630. Come to heaven, if thou seekest the Heart. What couldst thou gain in this house?

1631. Since thou art entangled in this snare, tear it, that thou mayest escape onto the road,

1632. Because this circle which is like a Mim, will not let thee out, unless it is broken in half.

1633. Do not be the butt of this chequered dome ; do not obey the orders of this circle.

1634. If thou art free from the orders of day and night, thou wilt be outside the circle of this world.

1635. Until thou canst make thy footsteps firm, do not step forward in search of any work.

1636. Prepare a way of escape from any work, before thou enterest on it.

1637. It is wise to look at the road, so that one may avoid falling into a pit.

1638. Make an opening in this house of deluge, that thou mayest have opportunity to escape.

1639. A cunning fox scented a dog ; he made two exits to his earth,

1640. But was unaware that the smoke of this deceitful heaven would close the exits.

1641. What is this happiness which pleases thee? Thou art unaware that thou art ignorant of thyself.

(184) 1642. It was destined that thou shouldst arrive in and depart from this world in sorrow.

1643. If now thou breakest the divine covenant, how can thy soul be relieved of its burden of responsibility?

1644. Walk in the way that the soul has shown thee ; throw away both worlds, because thou hast seen the world.

1645. Do not look down, that thou mayest not fear the depth ; do not look back, that thou mayest not fear the shadow.

1646. Take a provision of religion, because there are few habitations on the road ; bring the water of thy tears, because the road is waterless.

1647. Give the pure pearl into the custody of the oyster shell. Free thyself and set thy dust free.

1648. The revolving heaven has killed many a friend such as thee ; it has slain many more powerful than thee.

1649. Make a supreme effort in this duel, so that some time thou mayest throw it to the ground.

1650. There is no need to fear the shield and sword of him who is not skilled in this art.

1651. Do not call it a snake, because this twisted rope is naught against the attraction of thy love.

1652. How can one grieve for this glass which can be broken by the wind ?

(135) 1653. The generous ones who have extinguished the fire of gold, have conquered their enemies by a sweetmeat.

1654. So long as thou canst, through thine enlightened heart, like the sun, kill thine enemy with a rose.

The story of the two contending philosophers

1655. Two philosophers, belonging to the same school, contended unbecomingly.

1656. They boasted proudly and lacked humility. The empire was the empire of unity ; in it was no place for duality.

1657. There cannot be truth on both sides ; one is acceptable. There cannot be two chiefs ; one will be destroyed.

1658. Who ever saw two swords in one scabbard?
Who ever saw the banquet of two Jamshids in one place?

1659. It was the desire of the learned men that the school should belong to one only.

1660. When jealousy girt its loins for revenge, the school rejoiced at the loss.

(136) 1661. Both played a melody by night. To clear the school, they cried, saying,

1662. That each should lay aside enmity and drink the draught the other had prepared,

1663. To see which of the two had more courage in this affair, and whose poison was the deadlier,

1664. So that they should give the empire of two philosophies to one art and the life of two forms to one body.

1665. The first contestant made poison, so virulent, that it could melt black stone.

1666. He gave it to the other, saying : "This is a life-giving wine ; do not deem it to be poison, because it is better than sugar."

1667. The brave man took his draught ; he drank the poison as if it were sweet *sherbet*.

1668. He made an antidote from herbs and drank it. He closed the path of the poison by an antidote.

1669. He burnt like a moth and recovered his wings. Like a candle, he hastened back to the assembly.

1670. He cut a rose from the rose garden ; he made incantations and breathed them onto the rose.

1671. To overcome his enemy, he gave him that rose which was more effective than the poison.

1672. The enemy was overcome by fear, and he died from the rose which that magician gave him.

1673. The one neutralised the poison in his body by remedies. The other died from one rose because of baseless fears.

1674. Every coloured rose in the garden of the earth is a drop of blood from the heart of mankind.

1675. Know the garden of the world, whose spring time thou art, to be a house of grief, in which thou art a picture.

1676. Throw stones at these layers of earth; throw dust on this mirage.

1677. Pass on from this water and its thoughts; soar above this dust and its ruins.

(137) 1678. Do not study the secrets of the sun and the moon; destroy the sun and the moon like an eclipse,

1679. Because this golden moon which is in this pavilion, is the demon on the road of Abraham's love.

1680. The day made thy morn to burn thy heart; heaven changed that day of thine to this day.

1681. If thou hast a heart shining like the sun, one day thou wilt reach that day from this.

1682. Shed tears, that by the rose-water of hope thou mayest wash this chequered tablet clean,

1683. So that thine actions may ensure peace and the weight in thy scale be heavy on the day of resurrection.

1684. Religion which strengthens thine arm, will straighten the balance of thy scale.

1685. No noble man of virtue, caring for religion, ever grieved for this world.

1686. Since thy desire is for this world, leave religion to Nezāmi, and take thou this world.

THIRTEENTH DISCOURSE

On the contempt of this world

1687. Look at the age of the world and its miserliness, that thou mayest not be deceived by its youthful appearance.

1688. In the hand of this aged one who looks young, thou seest a bunch of roses, and it is fire.

1689. The spring is a mirage, do not be deceived by it. This Qebleh is a cross, do not worship it.

1690. Thy portion is not even a thorn from all these roses. If they all exist, thou art not.

(138) 1691. When thou art cut off from all thy desires, thou wilt take away from this house only what thou didst bring into it.

1692. When they carry their baggage on the sea of the day of resurrection, the poor will reach safety.

1693. No matter whether thou wilt save thy capital or lose it, they will take away that which they have given thee.

1694. This world is a market place, because it gives one thing and instantly takes away another.

1695. Although one is a silkworm, the other is a moth.

1696. Make a candle of thy gold, that like a lamp thou mayest gain by thine own wick.

1697. Destroy thy body and say to the nine orifices :
 "Be not." Cast away thy gold and say to pure gold :
 "Be not."

1698. Put the foot of thy generosity on gold, not thy hand, that they may not call thee a worshipper of gold like a rose.

1699. That gold which is not minted to one's own desire, is only arsenic.

1700. If thou lovest gold for its colour, the tail of the peacock also has that colour.

(139) 1701. The kings who take away gold by means of steel, are more blacksmiths than kings.

1702. Though the will of Aaron made of it a crown, it sank into a well because of that mistake.

1703. It is thy load so long as it is on thy head; it becomes thy steed, when thou treadest it under thy feet.

1704. If to give gold is to give life, not to take it is better than that gift.

1705. To take it gives thee greed of the world; to spend it gives thee ease of life.

1706. Is it not better not to take it, than to take it and spend it?

1707. When thou storhest gold, it is like rich food which gives thee bile; if thou spendest it, it is like a fruit which takes away bile.

1708. Gold which is mined in the East, is called western by the ignorant.

1709. The West and its people are the enemies of generosity; the East and its people are enlightened by generosity.

1710. Whatever the eastern morning gives, the western night borrows.

1711. Gold is the ruler of the life of all mines; the feather is the power of the wings of all birds.

1712. Though that Roman gold which, in the balance of love, is true by the stone of Damascus

(140) 1713. And is shining and beautiful, throw dust on it, because it is deceitful.

1714. Whose hat has this thief not carried? And who has not been misled by the wiles of this demon?

The story of the Hāji and the Sufi

1715. A pilgrim started on his pilgrimage; he practised the customs of the pilgrims.

1716. All that he had above his requirements, amounted to one purse of dinārs.

1717. He said: "My heart tells me that a certain noble Sufi who has renounced the world,

1718. "Is a religious man; if others are untrustworthy, he is to be trusted."

1719. He went out and brought him in secretly to his own house and entrusted him with his purse of dinārs.

1720. He said: "Guard this secretly; then bring it back to me when I return."

1721. The Hāji started on his way to the desert; the old man took away the gold which was entrusted to him.

1722. Oh Lord, I take refuge in thee! How long was it that the heart of the poor man yearned for that gold?

1723. He said: "I will straighten out my affairs with the gold; I have found the treasure which I required.

1724. "I will use it up quickly, that I may not be tied to that which God gives so secretly."

1725. He untied the knot of that string and enjoyed happiness for some nights.

1726. He spent on his belly all that gold with which he was entrusted, and he worshipped his belly.

1727. He laid his hand on that casket of dinārs ; he made the tresses of the beauties rings on his girdle.

1728. He tore the pious robe of the Sufi ; all that was left to him was grief and many excuses.

1729. He ate the prey, till not even a sign of it was left, and not even tallow remained for his lamp.

(141) 1730. When our pilgrim returned from his journey, he paid an unexpected visit to the dishonest man.

1731. He said : " Oh sage, bring it to me." He answered : " What ? " He said : " The gold." The Sufi replied : " Be silent,

1732. " Be generous, and do not dispute. Who can take revenue from a ruined village ? "

1733. " The purse was spent on lust and desire ; there is a great distance between a poor man and a purse.

1734. " No one has carried off booty from a Turk ; no man has ever entrusted his belongings to a rogue.

1735. " Your gold broke the pillar of my heart, and I was broken by the dust which settled upon me."

1736. With a hundred smiles he spent the money ; with a hundred tears he stood before him.

1737. He said : " Be generous, because we repent ; we were infidels and have become Mosalmāns.

1738. " Nature is pregnant with vice ; if there is vice, the fault is mine."

1739. Until the generosity of God said to him sternly : " Arise, because the dervish is standing, arise."

1740. When the owner of the silver turned to God, he was generous and let the matter drop.

1741. He said to himself : " Do not be hard on him ; he has nothing. What can I take from nothing ? "

1742. " What can I take from him who has not a grain of barley and has no pledge other than pleas for forgiveness ? "

(142) 1743. " That which remains to the Sufi of that property, is a round *Mim* and a Kufic *Alef*."

1744. He said : " If thou dost not wish me to ill-treat thee, and that I should make lawful to thee that which is unlawful,

1745. " Oh thou, who art as deceitful as the heaven, do not have a short sleeve and a long hand."

1746. There is no heart which is free from greed and envy ; none is to be trusted on this earth.

1747. Religion is good money, do not entrust it to the devil ; do not give the royal armlet to the keeper of dogs.

1748. If thou shouldst give it, oh master, the loss is thine ; none can take back capital from the poor.

1749. This is a stage of error, take virtue as thy provision. Lay hold on the skirts of religion and retire.

1750. Heaven does not rob the poor ; it robs the caravans of the rich.

1751. Since the guardian of this road is a robber, poverty is better than wealth.

1752. By experience, I found that the bee stings him who desires the honey.

1753. The flesh of the lion is bitter, so that after its death it may not be eaten by wild animals.

1754. The candle burns out through standing upright.
The moon wanes through seeking perfection.

1755. The wind which is both at war and at peace
with the dust, is safe on this road through its poverty.

(143) 1756. Does the seagull know that the calamity of
the fish is its silver?

1757. When gold is the scale of thy need, it becomes
the opening chapter of thy five prayers.

1758. Thou wilt not be free from the road of this
need, until like Nezāmi thy life is pure.

FOURTEENTH DISCOURSE

On the reproach of negligence

1759. Oh thou, who art entirely happy, eating fodder
like a donkey and a cow,

1760. Inattentive to this centre round which the sun
revolves, negligent of this circle of lapis lazuli,

1761. The matter is for the enlightened ones. What
grief have the enlightened for the world?

1762. Come to thy work. Why art thou sleeping?
Do the work which has been allotted to thee.

1763. Why art thou in a drunken sleep? They are
in ambush; the experienced do not act thus.

1764. See this mound of grief, look forward, observe
carefully, and see thine own incapacity.

1765. Thy reason is forgetful like an old man; that
he may remember thee, remind him.

1766. If thou hadst not the honour of reason, who
would call upon thy name? Who would worship thee?

1767. Reason is Messiah, do not rebel against it. If thou art not an ass, do not lead the ass into the mire.

1768. Either get thy light from the path of reason, or keep thy skirt far from its door.

(144) 1769. Do not intoxicate the reason which educates. Do not make the eagle a bait for the sparrow.

1770. The hostility of thy reason made the wine which is lawful everywhere, unlawful.

1771. What is wine that thy honour should be in its bowl? Reason is that spring which they call wine.

1772. Although wine takes away the grief of the world, oh master, do not take that which takes away reason.

1773. Wine is salt mixed with the heart, poured upon the heart of the saltless ones.

1774. If thou didst desire advice, do not take that which makes thee unmindful of all things.

1775. How ignorant is the man who tastes that which draws the line of oblivion across him.

1776. Blind the eye of vain thoughts; fetter the foot of drunkenness.

1777. Oh thou, who, like an *Alef*, art in love with thine own stature, thou lovest the gloom of thine own melancholy.

1778. If thou art an *Alef*, be a bird without wings; otherwise be like bā, a letter with a drooping head.

1779. When thou art, like an *Alef*, the ornament of the assembly, thou hast nothing and art poor like an *Alef*.

1780. Thou art not a thorn, that thou desirest height; it is better for thee to be humble like the rose.

1781. Thou art not a child, do not play games. Thou art not life, do not aspire to length.

(145) 1782. The day has come to an end, and the sun has set. The darkness grows, as the light decreases.

1783. I have heard that, when the day draws towards evening, the shadows become twice as long.

1784. Why dost thou, like a garden, worship shade? Be the destroyer of darkness, like the light of a lamp.

1785. If thou canst remove thy shadow, thy faults will become invisible like thy shadow.

1786. Not everyone can sit in darkness; only the spring of the water of life is in darkness.

1787. Oh thou, whose head and feet are upside down, thy judgment is in confusion.

1788. Dawn gives thee the golden bowl, that thou mayest cleanse thyself from thyself.

1789. When thou washest thy garments in this basin, draw thy water from the source of the sun.

1790. The disc of the sun, which is thy soap, cleanses thy blood-stained garments.

1791. Nature has kindled such a fire in thee, that no water remained in the heart of thy life.

1792. If thy body is not cleansed from the stain of selfishness, yet gold which is not all red is still gold.

1793. If we say all creation is pure, how then should the belly of hell be filled?

1794. A man gets the armour of truthfulness from fire alone.

(146) 1795. Falsehood will lead thee to need and poverty; thou wilt free thyself from all sorrows, if thou art truthful.

1796. If, like the scales, thou art true, entrust the truth of thy heart to the balance.

1797. Every barley-corn and every grain which thy hand takes out of thy measure and thy scales,

1798. Is each one in its own place, and on the day of retribution they will be brought forward.

1799. They will disclose thy secret ; they will show thy short measure and thine overcharges.

1800. Do not thyself hold the balance ; if thou holdest it, give more and take less.

1801. The rose embraced the thorn from its crookedness ; the sugar cane got its sweetness from its uprightness.

1802. Where truth raises its banner, the help of God clasps it by the hand.

The story of the tyrannical king and the truthful man

1803. There was a king who tyrannised over his subjects, and he had the art of Hajjāj in his inquisitions.

1804. Whatever the night brought forth from the day, was known to him in the morning.

1805. One morning, someone went to the king, disclosing more secrets than the sun and the moon.

1806. He had stored up games of the night from the moon, and had learned airs and graces from the dawn.

1807. He said : "A certain old man secretly called thee a murderer, a tyrant, and a shedder of blood."

1808. The king was enraged at these words and said : "I will kill him instantly."

1809. He spread the sheet of leather and strewed sand upon it. Demons would fly before his insanity.

(147) 1810. A youth went, swiftly as the wind, to the old man and said : "The king has accused thee of a crime."

1811. The old man made his ablutions, put on a shroud, went to the king, and began to speak.

1812. The cunning king wrung his hands and turned away his face in malice.

1813. He said : "I hear that thou hast spoken, calling me revengeful and a murderer."

1814. "Thou art aware of my wise rule. Why dost thou call me a tyrannical demon?"

1815. The old man replied : "I am not asleep; I have called thee worse things than this."

1816. "Youth and age are endangered by thy actions; towns and villages are afflicted by thy intrigues."

1817. "I who have thus recounted thy faults, bear the mirror reflecting thy virtues and vices."

1818. "Since the mirror shows thy picture correctly, break thyself; it is an error to break the mirror."

1819. "See that I speak truly and heed me; if it be not so, kill me on the scaffold."

1820. When the sage admitted the truth, his veracity affected the heart of the king.

1821. When the king recognised his superiority in truth, he realised the sage's rectitude and his own falsehood.

1822. He said : "Take away the funeral herbs and the shroud; dress him in our robe of honour and perfume him with ambergris."

1823. He turned away from tyranny, practised justice and the care of his subjects.

1824. None ever hid his own veracity, and no one suffered loss on account of truth.

1825. Be truthful, that thou mayest gain salvation ; if thou art truthful, God will give thee victory.

1826. If true words are all pearls, they are indeed bitter, because "Truth is bitter."

1827. When thy words are true, God is thy helper.

1828. The nature and the heart of Nezāmi are both true, and because of this truth, his affairs are in order.

FIFTEENTH DISCOURSE

On the reproach of the envious

1829. Each moment, the clever actor behind this curtain shows a strange scene on the curtain.

(148) 1830. The minstrels are seated on the carpet, but there is none to dance. The sea is full of pearls, but there is no diver.

1831. Silver, wealth, a crown, or a sword, are not grudged to thee, if thou dost not grudge them to thyself.

1832. Even though thou wert equal to the angel Gabriel, fate is not niggardly ; neither is divine power miserly.

1833. However much thou takest, there is still more to take. His profits are greater than thine expenditure.

1834. Travel on this road and note thy progress. Knock on this door and understand the mysteries.

1835. Its stones are rubies, and its herbs are the philosopher's stone. If thou dost not realise this, the fault is thine.

1836. Here the controlling hand and the pen are broken, because such great treasure is behind this curtain.

1837. Each moment a fruit comes from this garden ; each is more beautiful than the preceding one.

1838. In this treasury are many heart strings ; each necklace is more beautiful than the other.

1839. Each group of the travellers who walk one behind the other, is wiser than the preceding one.

1840. Reason honours only reality ; reason sets no store on age and youth.

1841. It is said that, when a stone grows old, it becomes a ruby. Opinions differ on this point.

1842. These people grow worse with age. In them there is nothing but noise, like an echo in the mountains.

1843. Thy milk is an unwholesome poison to him who has seen thee suckling in infancy.

(149) 1844. Justice is wanting in old age ; the old do not wish well to the young.

1845. A fresh rose gives great happiness. It is the old thorn which wounds.

1846. Collyrium is made from unripe grape. A serpent becomes a dragon in old age.

1847. An old brain cannot receive reason which inhabits the skull.

1848. He who compiles the tables of the stars, does not make his predictions from an old almanack.

1849. The old dogs who eat like lions, tear out the bowels of the gazelles wolfishly.

1850. If I fear the old wolves, look upon my beauty and blame me not.

1851. The old wound lightly, their wound is pleasant.
What can I do with the nature of youth, which is fire?

1852. Although youth is all wisdom, does it not also possess a strain of madness?

1853. Some grey-haired men who lay claim to youth, claim to be black, when they are white.

1854. I who scatter treasure like a rose, claim old age in youth.

(150) 1855. The old are possessed by self-love. Enmity to self is friendship with God.

1856. Call that new moon which thou sawest as a crescent, a full moon, when it is perfect.

1857. When the palm tree grows tall, stretch thy hand far that it may reach the dates.

1858. When the grain which is thrown into a corner, grows to an ear of corn, call it a grain no longer.

1859. See that, when a pond becomes a lake from the water of the stream, thou dost not look upon it with the same eyes.

1860. The sun looked with a different eye upon the night which entirely closed its eyes to the dawn.

1861. A deadly enemy who is wise, is better than a foolish friend.

1862. Do not look upon the sugar cane merely as vegetation; see how sweet it is.

1863. Give thy heart to merit not to a boastful man; surrender to merit wherever it may be.

1864. Though the oyster shell has much water, a pearl is produced by one drop of rain.

1865. Much trouble of heart and soul is needed to procure a royal pearl.

1866. Thy protection should sound its bugle for every banner which providence raises anew.

1867. They have not yet ruined this village ; nor have they yet rolled up this carpet.

1868. Do not censure creation ; beware, lest thou shouldst suffer the scourge like Satan.

1869. Providence compels him to rebel who did not submit to its commands.

The story of the young prince and his old enemies

(151) 1870. I heard a story that in far-off Marv there was a young prince, like a cypress.

1871. He was troubled on account of the nobles of his country. The country loved him as did fortune.

1872. The aged were fighting his youth. He was in peril from that approaching danger.

1873. One night he fell asleep full of anxiety on account of that rebellion. In that condition he saw a sage in a dream, who said to him :

1874. " Oh new moon, destroy the old tower ; oh fresh rose, cut off the old branch,

1875. " That the empire may be confirmed to thee and thy life become more pleasant than thy nature."

1876. When the king awoke from his deep sleep, he destroyed those persons.

1877. He built up anew and destroyed the old. The empire was confirmed anew to that young king.

1878. The destroyer of the empire should be humbled. A treacherous army is better dispersed.

1879. The new branch will not grow from the trunk of the cypress, unless the old branch is cut off.

1880. Unless the water is diverted from the stream,
the plane tree will not unfold its leaves.

1881. Unless the passage to the spring be clear, water
will not be born from the heart and the eye of the clay.

1882. With thee, but outside thee, is one who feeds
thy heart. He gives good counsel to thine ears.

1883. Draw that sword from its scabbard for an instant.
How long wilt thou keep it sheathed, oh thou,
its enemy?

1884. That breath comes not from the casket of this
dust. Thou dost not give that pure companion his due.

1885. Sacrifice everything to such a being and be
wholly entitled to the name of generosity.

(152) 1886. The rich who attained to honour and wealth,
found the eternal empire through generosity.

1887. The seed of generosity gives sure harvest.
When it ripens, it gives a provision for the day of judgment.

1888. Oh God, give to Nezāmi pure gold from the
treasure of thy generosity.

SIXTEENTH DISCOURSE

On travelling swiftly

1889. Oh thou, whose banner is raised by a breeze,
and who lowerest it to that which is mere dust,

1890. There is no village, and thou claimest to be a
villager. There is no empire, and thou claimest the
throne of Solomon.

1891. Thou art not a sword. What are all these
wounds? Thou art not a bell. What are these tinklings?

1892. Scatter silver like the edge of the sword. Rise, be empty like the inside of a drum.

1893. The devil draws thee to himself ; thou hast not yet fallen. Do not give up the fight ; thou art not dead but living.

1894. Do not surrender to a Magian ; do not claim courage, when thy sword is never drawn.

1895. The eloquent are worthy to read the proclamation of empire. The Messiah is the recipient of the sneeze of Adam.

(153) 1896. He who, like a moth, possesses true love, will strike single-handed at the army of fire.

1897. Live for a short time and die. Throw down the beggar's robe and receive an empire.

1898. By the living God, thy generosity which is a cloak for plunder, is not godly.

1899. Be a lion ; do not fear the kitchen cat. Be talc ; do not fear the fires of hell.

1900. If thou art depraved, hell fire is thy lawful portion. If thou art gold or a ruby, do not fear fire.

1901. How much more pride, oh rogue of the dustbin ? How much more self-glorification, oh thou bag of bones ?

1902. There have been others before us, who did not rest from seeking high position.

1903. See what profit was theirs from that glory. There was a profit, but since it was lost, what profit was it ?

1904. If thou, a grain of dust, shouldst tread upon heaven in power and dignity like the sun and the moon,

1905. Even if thou shouldst surpass that circle, since thou art dust, thou wilt fall.

1906. So that thy head may not be cut off, as hair is cut, beware, do not set foot on this pinnacle.

1907. Thou art not a bird, thou canst not fly. Unless thou strivest mightily, thou wilt not reach it.

1908. Attack heaven valorously, so that astonishingly it may fall at thy feet.

1909. Thou hast drunk wine, why blame the poison? Thou hast sinned, why blame fate?

1910. Do not rail at fate, oh good man; fate has done no ill to thee and to me.

154) 1911. Fate made great efforts and performed great wonders to improve us.

1912. Since we are of no account in the world, why should we blame fate?

1913. Unless the ruby is lustrous, the king will not put the seal of acceptance upon it.

1914. Stones are plentiful in the world; those which turn to rubies are rare.

1915. The thorn and the jasmine are both vegetable growths. One is the thorn which damages sight; the other is collyrium.

1916. Colour and scent do not leave the true rose, even if it has no help from the water of the stream.

1917. Even if water could increase its benefits, how could it turn thorns and thistles into jasmine?

1918. If the scheme were not thus established, the laws of the world would have been otherwise.

1919. The affair rests in the hands of God and is not affected by our designs. He gives empire and riches to whom he wills in this world.

1920. A man falls through lack of grace ; those who are favoured, need have no fear in this world.

1921. The fortune of him who seeks the divine empire, is ever high. Be the servant of that empire, wherever it is to be found.

1922. This kingdom is bestowed by divine grace and not by worldly authority. They do not give an empire in jest.

1923. Hold to those who are spiritually rich, so that thou mayest not need to search vainly.

1924. Do not associate with the base ; be accepted and honoured by the world.

1925. Prosper with the good fortune of Orion. Break the walnut and test thy fortune.

(155) 1926. Humble thyself, if thou seekest the empire. Free thyself from the tangled affairs of this world.

1927. It is the pure water which is welcome. Aloe-wood is burnt, because it is knotted.

1928. Follow the Heart ; give thy heart to none. Thine own body is load enough on thy way.

1929. How long wilt thou lay thy hand on another bough, saying : " Oh, that I had greater riches ? "

1930. Even if thou couldst grasp the whole world, since thou must leave it, why seek it ?

1931. Renounce greed, because it is the robber on the road of devotion. Contentment will kill thy greed.

1932. The centre of this turquoise-coloured dome is open to thee and closed to imagination.

1933. Either do not fear, grasp it ; or vanquish it with one thought.

1934. There is no knowledge left in the clay of humanity, no spirituality left in the whole world.

1935. In the two picture books of these nine scribes, there is no figure which has reality.

1936. Do not seek the friendship of the enemy of reality; do not seek the water of life in the mouth of a dragon.

1937. A wise enemy who is the grief of one's soul, is better than a foolish friend.

The story of the wounded child

1938. The child of a nobleman went out with some others of his own age.

1939. As he was running, he fell down; his happiness was destroyed, and his backbone was broken.

1940. The distress of his companions was greater than the calamity which had befallen him.

1941. He who was his best friend, said: "We must hide him in the bottom of a well,

(156) 1942. "So that the secret may not be as manifest as the sun, and that we should not be ashamed before his father."

1943. The wisest child among them was his enemy.

1944. He said: "Surely the matter will not be kept a secret by this company.

1945. "Since they consider me to be his enemy, they will lay the blame for this misfortune upon me."

1946. He went to his father and informed him of the accident, so that the father put the matter right.

1947. He who possesses the jewel of wisdom, is able to do all things.

1948. Who can unloose the knot of fortune? He who can trample upon it.

1949. Since Nezāmi has passed beyond the possessions of this world, his work has surpassed high heaven.

SEVENTEENTH DISCOURSE

On devotion and solitude

1950. Oh thou, who neglectest God and thyself, remaining in the grief of thy soul and the toil of thy body,

1951. Be silent; the movements of the boasting spirit which is in this world, reach only to the lips.

1952. Do not embrace the world like the arch of heaven; do not bind thyself to what is not thine.

1953. The power of the world is greater than the power of thine arm; its weights are too heavy for thy scales.

1954. Do not expect the strength of a mountain from a speck of dust. Do not expect to boil a cauldron on one spark.

1955. Every loin which is girt with the belt of contentment, is freed for ever from the service of the body.

1956. The harvest of greed is disappointment; the crown of contentment is on the head of submission.

1957. In this defile, there are many pickpockets; he whose purse is emptiest, is most at ease.

1958. If thou art wealthy, submit to anxiety; otherwise go, hang on the skirts of poverty.

(157) 1959. There was a beardless man who grieved at his condition. He saw two men fighting and pulling each other's beards.

1960. He said : " Though my face is hairless like a tongue, I am glad to be safe from those who pull beards."

1961. They have deemed it advisable to take away thine ass and thy load,

1962. So that, like Jesus, thou mayest reach the door of the Heart, and arrive at thy destination without an ass and without a load.

1963. If thou art a believer, do not ponder on fire-worship. Strive for refinement, do not be uncouth.

1964. This is a wave of destruction, go with less speed. Throw thy burden into the water, and save thy soul.

1965. It is better for thee to be pithless and ruined, that thou mayest float on the water like a gourd.

1966. There is value in eating little and sleeping little. The treasure of greatness is in destruction.

1967. Thou art not a lover of carrion like a kite ; be a crow, do not dip thy feet in blood.

1968. If thy body is bloodless like a picture, thou wilt be saved from being eaten by vultures.

1969. Know that blood is a heart turned to wine, a fire turned to water by shame.

1970. That thou mayest break the power of blood, thou wilt suffer the stab of the lancet, even if thou art iron.

(158) 1971. Do not suddenly give up the habit of eating ; save by eating less.

1972. The lion is proud, because it eats little. It is the nature of fire to consume much.

1973. Since the day was satisfied with one loaf, it became the light of the eye of the wise.

1974. When the night drank its morning draught too early, the excess of its blood turned it black.

1975. Excess of food lessens reason. It makes the heart which is like sweet herbs, into the target of grief.

1976. Thy reason is a soul, and thou art its body. Thy soul is a treasure, and thou art its talisman.

1977. How can this treasure give thee light, until thou breakest the talisman of its door?

1978. Dust is known to be untrustworthy. Say : " Let there be no association with the untrustworthy."

1979. The dust will not grieve for thee, were it to bring the whole of thy life to an end in grief; do not grieve.

1980. Someone said to a negro : " Oh father, why this laughter? One should weep at such blackness as thine? "

1981. He answered : " As I have no hope in this world, it is better to have a black face and to laugh."

(159) 1982. It is not strange to find happiness in a black face, because a black cloud gives out lightning.

1983. Since thou hast no desire for this prison, be lightning and laugh at the whole world.

1984. The laughter of the parrot lessens the sweetness of sugar. Loud laughter closes the mouth of the partridge.

1985. It is better to weep than to open the mouth in untimely laughter.

1986. To burn and to laugh like lightning, shortens life like a flame.

1987. What is this laughter without joy like a candle? One should weep much at this laughter.

1988. Bite thy lip in laughter, that thou mayest not laugh immoderately.

1989. To weep much is not good for the eyes; too much laughter is not becoming.

1990. There must be a due proportion of good and evil in the old and the young.

1991. Rise, grieve and be happy. Sometimes one and sometimes the other is fitting.

1992. There is a sorrowful cry in a happy heart. Within the jet of the night, there is the jewel of the day.

1993. No one has indulged in his lusts without afterwards receiving a blow.

1994. Every load of baggage has its own bell; every sweetmeat has its own fly.

(160) 1995. Providence is thy wise nurse; leave thy good and evil to her care.

1996. If she gives thee vinegar, do not ferment like syrup. She desires thy good. What knowest thou? Be silent.

1997. The serious traveller on this road must make constant effort. It needs a Moses to be the travelling companion of the Prophet Khezr.

1998. Thou must serve the great to reach greatness.

1999. In time of need, the helpful friend is he who withdraws the snare, not he who drags one down to calamity.

The story of a sage and his disciples

2000. A traveller, one of the spiritual guides, was on a journey; with him were a thousand disciples.

2001. The sage in that desert broke wind loudly and gave it as a trust to the trustees of the dust.

2002. Every one of them left him, until they had all departed but one.

2003. The sage said to him : " What happened, that they all departed, and thou didst remain ? "

2004. The disciple said : " Oh thou, who livest in my heart, the crown of my head is the dust of the sole of thy feet.

2005. " I did not come by a wind at first, that the same wind should blow me back."

(161) 2006. He who expects a gift, will go when he has received it. He who comes by a wind, will go by a wind.

2007. Dust travels quickly and settles quickly, therefore it cannot establish itself in one place.

2008. The mountain comes slowly into being, therefore it is so firm.

2009. The way of the world is to divulge secrets. The work of patience is to bear burdens.

2010. Bear the load of piety, if thou art not lustful. Do not bear the burden of nature, if thou art not an ass.

2011. So long as the proclamation of thy piety was not untrue, thine eyes wept on account of it, but it was not stained.

2012. Piety in the gold-embroidered robe of the king is the story of the basket and Solomon.

2013. The candle which scatters gold every night, is an ascetic hidden under a cloak.

2014. Piety is a stranger in the wine tavern. Treasure is precious in a ruined place.

2015. The piety of Nezāmi, which is a beautiful garment, shelters under the banner embroidered with gold.

EIGHTEENTH DISCOURSE

On the contempt of hypocrites

2016. Some counterfeiters met together and made a new counterfeit die.

(162) 2017. Know their outward appearance to be tin like the inside. Guard thy words from them.

2018. To thy face they are more agreeable than the daylight; behind thy back they are more deceitful than darkness,

2019. Smoother than a candle, knottier than aloë-wood; smooth in outward appearance, but cunning in reality.

2020. They are unjust and uncharitable; they find fault, and they complain.

2021. They have learnt of love merely from the lips of others; they have stored up revenge heap upon heap.

2022. They are eager, but more withered than a heart; they are alive, but as dead as their own hearts.

2023. Do not test their friendship on the touchstone of thy heart. Thou art not drunk, do not put thy foot in this mire.

2024. They echo like the mountain; do not tell them thy secrets. If thou desirest secrecy, do not give them voice.

2025. They boast that they may gain thine affection; they strive to gain from thee.

2026. Since that friendship is due to their need, may the curse of God be on such amity.

2027. Any speech which has a selfish object, is friendship which incites to enmity.

2028. Friendship which is based on division, is not friendship but enmity.

(163) 2029. What will a friend call thy poison? A sweet-meat. What will a friend call thy faults? Virtues.

2030. A friend is a healing salve. If he is not, cease to associate with the unworthy.

2031. It is a cat which eats its own kittens from love of its own kind.

2032. Who is a friend? He who keeps secrets. All these divulge secrets like time.

2033. They all plan how they can surpass thee, and by what schemes they may lessen the value of thy coin.

2034. Outwardly their reins are tied to thee; in the time of necessity they necessarily depart.

2035. If the appearance of a friendship is denied by thy heart, it is enmity.

2036. How can the body know who is thy friend? The heart knows who is faithful.

2037. Thou hast one heart and a thousand heartaches, one withered rose and a thousand wounds from thorns.

2038. There are a thousand kingdoms but only one Fereidun. There is much ambergris, but only few enjoy it.

2039. Everything in this world divulges secrets. Only thy heart is the confidant of thy secrets.

2040. If thy heart does not lock up that secret, how canst thou expect it to be kept in the hearts of others?

2041. If thy heart is not transparent, and this is wrong, why is thy secret like a sun in the desert?

2042. If thy heart does not tell thy secret by its transparency, why does a glass show the wine it holds?

2043. Since friendship is a necessity, do not withhold thy secret from thy friend.

2044. Since thou hast set foot on this empire, strive to gain a partner.

2045. Unless thou knowest the soul of thy friend, do not waste the jewel of thine own secrets.

The story of Jamshid and his household

(164) 2046. One of the household of Jamshid was the keeper of his secrets. Their relation was closer than that of the moon and the sun.

2047. The fortunes of that young man rose to such a height, that the king honoured him above all the world.

2048. Since he surpassed others in faithfulness, the king entrusted his treasure to his heart.

2049. Notwithstanding his great intimacy with the king, that youth sought to go far from him, as an arrow flies from the bow.

2050. The secret of the king wore down the soul of the young man. He was unable to tell that secret to anyone.

2051. An old woman found her way to that young man and saw that his red tulips were like her yellow roses.

2052. She said : " Oh cypress, what wind of autumn has blown on thee, thou who drinkest water from the stream of the king ?

2053. "Why art thou pale? Thou art not treated with cruelty. What is the cause of thy grief in this fortune?"

2054. "Why is the colour of age on thy youthful cheek? Why are thy wild tulips like a dandelion?"

2055. "Since thou keepest the secrets of the king of the world, be happy like the heart of the king."

2056. "The subjects prosper through their kings, especially the leaders of the army."

2057. The young man said: "Thou speakest ignorantly of this matter. Thou knowest not what is in my heart."

2058. "Patience has given me pain as my companion; patience has turned my face so pale."

2059. "The king has placed in my heart, consonantly with his majesty, the jewel of his secrets."

2060. "That which he has entrusted to my heart, is great; I cannot divulge the secrets of the great."

(165) 2061. "My heart is not locked on his words, as it would be on lesser matters;"

2062. "Therefore I do not laugh with thee, lest the bird of the secret might fly from my tongue."

2063. "I keep this secret in my heart. I give it my heart and my heart bleeds,"

2064. "And if I divulge the secret of the king, fortune will grieve for me."

2065. The old woman said: "Do not mention any name. Keep thy secret to be thine only companion."

2066. "Do not deem anyone to be the confidant of this secret. Do not even consider thine own shadow as thy confidant."

2067. "It is better to have this golden-yellow face than that it should be reddened in blood."

2068. Every night I hear the head constantly beseeching the tongue to beware.

2069. If thou desirest life, hold thy tongue. Thou art not the sun, do not disclose secrets.

2070. A man who holds his tongue, is happy. It is the mad dog whose tongue hangs out.

2071. It is for thine own good to be tongue-tied. It is better that a sword should be sheathed.

2072. This counsel gives ease to life: The tongue is the plague of life.

2073. That they may not scent thee out, as they would the violet, and cut thy throat on account of thy tongue,

2074. Guard thy tongue in this world, that thy head may not cry "Alas!" in the basin.

(166) 2075. Do not open thy mouth, though there be much pleasure in it, because there are many ears behind the wall.

2076. Do not listen to evil, but be deaf; do not speak evil, but be dumb.

2077. How long wilt thou write? Slow down thy pen. They will write against thee; keep thy mouth shut.

2078. Wash away what thou hearest as with water. Be a mirror, do not say what thou seest.

2079. The devotees do not relate in the day what they see in the night, oh how strange!

2080. Therefore this starry dome will not tell by day what it sees by night.

2081. If thou hast been instructed behind this veil, do not repeat by day what thou hast seen by night.

2082. In the heart of the night, which is the secret repository of treasures, are the treasures of many hearts.

2083. The swift enlightened travellers pass by that which they see.

2084. He who surpasses high heaven, carries off the ball from the arena of the heart.

2085. The eye and the tongue which love outward appearances, are as the hair of the head and the skin of the body.

2086. Love, when secret, is a miracle ; when manifest, it leads one to the wine taverns.

2087. They have made this knot with the cord of faith. They have carded its cotton by religion.

2088. The bud which made its soul the veil of this secret, is a fountain of blood, when it opens its mouth.

(167) 2089. How can the mouth attain to this dignity? The story of the Heart must be told by the tongue of the Heart ; when it comes to the tongue, it is fire.

2090. This food is wholesome in the bowl of the Heart ; when it comes to the tongue, it is fire.

2091. This dumbness is thine eloquence. Thy haste is to go slowly.

2092. The enlightenment of the heart informs him who leaves speech to others.

2093. Only the tongue of the Heart can translate the language of the Heart, which is its idiom.

2094. If thou ownest the happy heart of Nezāmi, the whole of the empire of contentment is thine.

NINETEENTH DISCOURSE

On welcoming the next world

2095. See the private assembly adorned, shining, and beautiful like a full moon,

2096. Candles burning, and sweetmeats plentiful, the throne set up, and ambergris prepared.

2097. The world is the enemy of thy life ; withdraw thyself from its friendship.

2098. See whom it has drawn to itself with chains. Whoso observed it, reproached it.

2099. The guardians of the divine court cry aloud against thee who art worldly and hast abandoned religion,

2100. Saying : " Turn back from the door of the tyrants and approach the tabernacle of this mystery."

2101. Thou art burnt by the heat of this desert ; they will not hide what thou hast hidden.

(168) 2102. The revengeful dog was spiteful. Was it for this that the fox grew fur ?

2103. This dark desert is a hell of burning sulphur ; how happy is he who passes through it quickly.

2104. Collect the water of thy mouth politely ; spit it out at the fire of this spring of sulphur.

2105. Give back this loan from heaven ; give up this earth-born dust.

2106. Skilfully throw all away, that thou mayest own nothing and be free.

2107. He who walks proudly on this road, robs me and thee.

2108. The enmity of a scorpion is worse than that of a dragon, because one is hidden from thee, and the other is visible.

2109. The house is full of thieves, hide thy jewels. The desert is full of demons, tell thy beads.

2110. The plunderers on the road of the heart rob near the halting place.

2111. I fear that, when they attack thee by night, they will expel thee humbled from this desert.

2112. A small enemy is a great calamity; to neglect him is a grievous error.

2113. Do not fight half-heartedly with a small enemy; thou wilt be shattered, if thou art not sharp-sighted.

2114. The ant blinds the lion cub, notwithstanding its insignificance and its lack of power.

(169) 2115. The caravan of captives reached its destination; the loaded ship reached the shore.

2116. Hide thyself like a sleep, that they may not see thee. Flow like water, that they may not drive thee.

2117. One should not set foot in this monastery; if thou enterest, thou must return.

2118. If thou wilt not go back, they will make thy heart bleed; they will leave thy rations outside this monastery.

2119. If it were not a merit to leave the earth, heaven would not travel night and day.

2120. Arise, that the demon may not tear thy collar. Take hold of the skirt of religion and take refuge in it.

2121. The laws of religion call thee, listen to them; nature is not thine, abandon it.

2122. The laws of religion are like a breeze, receive them in thy soul. Nature is dust, abandon it to the world.

2123. The laws of religion have given sweet herbs into thy hands. Do not worship nature, worship only the laws of religion.

2124. Do not gallop to every door like a breeze. Do not touch the point of every thorn like the air.

2125. All these are like shadows, be thou like the light. If thou ownest everything, abandon all.

2126. This revolving heaven is a noose round thy neck ; take heed how thou freest thy head from this noose.

2127. If it explains its own condition to thee, or informs thee of its age,

2128. Thy cave is too narrow for its deep thoughts ; thy life is naught to its duration.

(170) 2129. The end of thy speech is silence ; the result of thy work is oblivion.

2130. It is better that thou shouldst knock at the door of love, whilst thou livest in this world,

2131. Because these few moments of thy wretched life are not happy except only through such wine.

2132. The heavens have prepared no royal robe without taking away two lengths of cloth.

2133. This quarrelsome heretical world will write against thee with a sharp-pointed pen whatever thou doest.

2134. They will open the same door of kindness and tenderness to thee, as thou openest.

2135. If thine eyes are curtains of evil, they play the same game with thee behind this curtain.

2136. Know thou well that those who have seen much good and evil, have not approved of evil.

2137. He who passed along the road, gave some indication. He who did evil gave some pledge.

2138. Whether thy outward appearance is good or bad, thy name will be that which thou takest with thee.

2139. The name of a thistle is thorn; he who sells ambergris is called ambergris.

2140. Be not worthless, that at the time of judgment thou mayest not be ashamed of thyself and before God.

2141. Curse this world which burns the heart; throw a stone at this glass full of blood.

(171) 2142. Stone this flaming player; draw the pen of abrogation through this word;

2143. Conquer this fortress of tin; ride on this chequered pie-bald horse,

2144. That heaven, from the pulpit of the nine tabernacles, may read the proclamation of kingship in thy name.

2145. Thy work is to lower the banner; mine is to raise it.

2146. I am mankind and soar to angelic heights. I lay claim to that part of heaven.

2147. My worth is greater than my stature; my circuit is beyond this circle.

2148. There is no water, but I rule the sea. I am not an owl, but I examine treasure.

2149. Like the heavens, I have my foot on the treasure, therefore my place is very high.

The story of Hārunor Rashid and the barber

2150. When Hārun became Caliph, the Abbāsid standard reached to the heavens.

2151. One night he turned his back on his wife and his face to the comfort of the bath.

2152. A barber who was shaving his head, grieved him with every hair he cut,

2153. Saying : " Oh thou, who art aware of my skill, choose me to-day for thy son-in-law.

(172) 2154. " Proclaim the marriage contract ; betroth thy daughter to me, thy humble servant."

2155. The Caliph was somewhat annoyed ; yet he exercised tolerance,

2156. Saying : " The heat has inflamed his heart ; he is struck with awe at my majesty.

2157. " He has lost his senses, therefore he talks so foolishly ; otherwise he would not make such demands on me."

2158. Next day he tested him with greater care and found the same impress on the false coin.

2159. He tried him thus several times, but his behaviour did not change.

2160. When the affairs of the wretch darkened the mind of the Caliph, he took the story to the minister for his instruction,

2161. Saying : " I have suffered this indignity from a mere barber ; the solution of this mystery must come from thee.

2162. " He aspires to be my son-in-law. See what his impertinence impels him to do !

2163. "He has a dagger in his mouth and a razor in his hand ; it is unwise to entrust my head to two swords.

2164. "Whenever like fate he comes to me, he throws stones at me and at my jewel."

2165. The minister said : "Thou art safe from his demands. Perhaps his foot is on a treasure.

2166. "When that simpleton comes to thee again, order him to step off from that place where he was standing at first.

2167. "If he still offends thee, strike off the head of this barber ; otherwise dig under the place where he stood at first."

(173) 2168. The obedient prince submissively changed the places accordingly.

2169. When the barber stepped off from his first place, the Caliph saw his cheeks change colour.

2170. He saw him dumb and speechless ; his eyes and his tongue taught courtesy.

2171. So long as his feet stood on a treasure, he saw his face royal in the mirror.

2172. When he had no treasure under his feet, he was again himself, the barber.

2173. They dug quickly under where he had stood ; they found treasure under his feet.

2174. He who stands on a treasure, reveals a treasure by his speech.

2175. The treasure of Nezāmi, which shatters the talisman, is a pure heart and an enlightened mind.

TWENTIETH DISCOURSE

On the shamelessness of the people

2176. Why are we who have abandoned self, sitting lowly in this dust?

2177. Association with this dust has humbled thee ; the earth has made many such schemes.

2178. Life has gone by, and we are left far behind ; we are stages behind the caravan.

(174) 2179. These two angels are our captives, but because of our ill-fame, demons are our kindred.

2180. We do our hot work coldly like a stoker. We are cold after heat like ashes.

2181. Where is the light of the heart and the enlightenment of the mind ? Where is the ease and comfort of the past ?

2182. The black morning of the day of resurrection has dawned. The banner of the dawn of life has vanished.

2183. The laughter of negligence has died on the lips ; the spirit of the desire of life is broken.

2184. See by what magic thou canst escape from the captivity of this earth.

2185. Fly from this deadly snare ; acumen provides for such escapes.

2186. The wolf has stronger teeth than the fox ; the fox escapes, because he is more intelligent.

2187. Strive to be faithful and not to worship thyself but to worship God.

2188. Be the dust of a faithful heart and the soil of justice which grows green herbs.

2189. Every merit, learnt from the heart, is sewn into the selvedge of the cloth of fidelity.

2190. If there is merit in man, it is a lost jewel, if thou dost not approve it.

2191. If thou approvest it, it will change; the source of its water will be doubled.

(175) 2192. Experienced men will cherish merit with their life, wherever they see it.

2193. The dust of the world is purified only by merit, and this merit is not found in the world to-day.

2194. If merit raises its head, the unworthy will lay hold on it.

2195. They distress the soul of the meritorious, until they destroy his virtue.

2196. They consider discipline to be mere outward show; they attribute madness to meditation.

2197. Some base men have assumed the title of generosity; the worthless slaves call themselves faithful.

2198. They ridicule liberality, and they abuse eloquence.

2199. They draw the picture of fidelity on ice. They boast to the sun and the moon.

2200. If a word is a balm of comfort, it wounds the hearts of such people.

2201. If they drink sweetness from the lips of a man, they lay their diseased hands on his face.

2202. They will pour vinegar, sour as unripe grapes, on a warm heart, sweet as figs.

2203. The eyes of the people are blind to merit; they can only see defects and faults.

2204. The harvest of the sea is not all pearls. One merit is enough for one man.

(176) 2205. In the eyes of a blind man, the Tigris is but a drop of water. The leg of a locust is a great burden for an ant.

2206. These who claim fame, seek faults; they have no merit, and they pity the virtuous.

2207. In this earth they are darker than the essence of the clay; they bring more bitterness to the heart than grief.

2208. If they reach the mind, they darken it like smoke; if they reach a lamp, they are but a wind.

2209. See the state of the world and who are its leaders, and who are chosen for renown.

2210. These who dishonour their own cradle, break my heart as though it were their covenant.

2211. I am like the moon in heaven; I shall not be broken. If I wane, I shall increase.

2212. How can they cheat heaven in this game, even though they take endless pains?

2213. Like the companions of Noah, they are the ancient enemies of eloquence which is fresher than the garden of the soul.

2214. Wage war, oh standard of Khezr! Pray, oh sacred breath of Noah!

2215. My heart wishes them no ill; if it remembers them, may it be forgotten.

2216. My silence is a strong voice crying out against their limitless iniquity.

(177) 2217. When the casket holds one pearl, it is full of sound; when it is full it is silent.

2218. When a cask is half empty, it makes a noise ; but it is silent when it is full.

2219. If thou art full of learning, be silent ; abandon speech and be all ears.

The story of the nightingale and the falcon

2220. When the roses were in flower, the nightingale spoke to the falcon on the lawn of the garden,

2221. Saying : " Thou art more silent than all other birds. How is it that thou hast won the game ? Tell me the reason.

2222. " All thy life long, thou hast been silent and hast not opened thy lips to speak one fair word to any man.

2223. " Thy abode is the hand of Sanjar ; thy food is the breast of the partridge.

2224. " Why should I who, in the twinkling of an eye, bring forth a hundred beautiful pearls from the invisible mine of my heart,

2225. " Search for worms for food ? Why should my nest be among thorns ? "

2226. The falcon answered : " Be all ears ; watch my silence and be silent.

2227. " I who have some little experience, do a hundred things and speak of none.

2228. " Go, because thou art distracted by the world ; thou doest no action, and speakest of a thousand.

2229. " To me who am all reality, this hunting ground gives the breast of the partridge and the hand of the king.

2230. " Since thou hast so much to say, eat worms and sit on thorns ; that is all."

2231. Where they read a proclamation in the name of Fereidun, who will listen to the sound of a drum?

2232. The dawn, heralded only by the crowing of a cock, is but a smile of pity.

2233. No neck is free from the noose of the silent heavens.

2234. Do not attempt the heights of sublime poetry, that thou mayest not be imprisoned in the city like Nezāmi.

On the ending of the book

(178) 2235. Oh scribe, may God bless thy morning. Since I have laid down my pen, take thou it up,

2236. Because this design surpasses high heaven. It makes my pen paint many-coloured pictures.

2237. I have made a dagger for the king, of all these diamonds which I have set,

2238. Because the iron of my sword was still in the stone, and the forge of my smithy was small.

2239. If the empire had been favourable to me, I should not have spent my life thus.

2240. I feel in my heart that I have committed a sin in blackening these pages.

2241. The product of a few nights of manifestation is found in this royal bridal chamber.

2242. Eat of this roast lamb; why be satisfied with smoke? Burn up all the salted meat.

2243. Go further, but go slowly. If thou ponderest, ponder deeply.

2244. Erase any word which lacks courtesy and eloquence, because this is my wish.

2245. Draw the pen through whatsoever raises its banner against knowledge, even though it were myself.

2246. If in it I have not done justice to speech, I would not have it sent from city to city.

(179) 2247. Eloquence has shackled me in this place, but all places are under my hand.

2248. Providence said : "Thou art not earth, move on. How long wilt thou sit still like the earth? Move on."

2249. My virgin eloquence which is peerless, has no garment long enough to clothe herself.

2250. The short garments reach only to her knee; therefore she kneels.

2251. She should be garbed in silk brocade, that it may be fitting for her to stand upright.

2252. What do I gain in the eyes of old and young but a voice?

2253. The market was noisy, but there was no gold; I had the toil of the market place and nothing more.

2254. Ganjeh has imprisoned me; otherwise the treasury of Erāq would have been mine with ease.

2255. The whole world has cried out saying : "Oh young man, where is Ganjeh, and who is Nezāmi?"

2256. Praise be to God, that this book has reached its end; the greater part of life is over.

2257. Nezāmi has covered it with jewels from head to foot to beautify it.

2258. May his scattering of jewels be blessed to the king to whom this gem belongs.

(180) 2259. The bird of the pen opened its wings on the paper and flew off with the book.

2260. He bent his head and scattered pearls from his lips ; he completed Makhzanol Asrār.

2261. Reckoning correctly, it was, in truth, the twenty-fourth of the First Rabi'.

2262. From the time of Hejrat to this time, five hundred and seventy-two years have passed.

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